

TEXT OF THE PLAY.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Prince of Wales' Theatre, London, April 6, 1867

HON. GEORGE D'ALROY.....	Mr. Frederick Younge
CAPTAIN HAWTREE.....	Mr. Bancroft
ECCLES.....	Mr. George Honey
SAM GERRIDGE.....	Mr. Hare
DIXON	
MARQUISE DE ST. MAUR.....	Miss Larkin
ESTHER ECCLES.....	Miss Marie Wilton
POLLY ECCLES.....	Miss Lydia Foote

ACT I. The Little House in Stangate
(Courtship)

ACT II. The Lodgings in Mayfair
(Matrimony)

ACT III. The Little House in Stangate
(Widowhood)

*A lapse of eight months occurs between the first Act and the second,
and a lapse of twelve months between the second and the third.*

The Lake English Classics

General Editor

LINDSAY TODD DAMON

Professor of English, Brown University

- ADDISON AND STEELE—*Sir Roger de Coverley Papers*—ABBOTT
 ADDISON AND STEELE—*Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator*—ABBOTT
 AUSTEN—*Pride and Prejudice*—WARD
 BROWNING—*Selected Poems*—REYNOLDS
 Builders of Democracy—GREENLAW
 BUNYAN—*The Pilgrim's Progress*—LATHAM
 BURKE—*Speech on Conciliation with Collateral Readings*—WARD
 BURNS—*Selected Poems*
 CARLYLE—*Essay on Burns* } 1 vol.—MARSH
 CHAUCER—*Selections*—GREENLAW
 COLERIDGE—*The Ancient Mariner* }
 LOWELL—*Vision of Sir Launfal* } 1 vol.—MOODY
 COOPER—*The Last of the Mohicans*—LEWIS
 COOPER—*The Spy*—DAMON
 DANA—*Two Years Before the Mast*—WESTCOTT
 DEFOE—*Robinson Crusoe*—HASTINGS
 Democracy Today—GAUSS
 DE QUINCEY—*The Flight of a Tartar Tribe*—FRENCH
 DE QUINCEY—*Joan of Arc and Selections*—MOODY
 DICKENS—*A Christmas Carol, etc.*—BROADUS
 DICKENS—*A Tale of Two Cities*—BALDWIN
 DICKENS—*David Copperfield*—BALDWIN
 DRYDEN—*Palamon and Arcite*—COOK
 ELIOT, GEORGE—*Silas Marner*—HANCOCK
 ELIOT, GEORGE—*The Mill on the Floss*—WARD
 EMERSON—*Essays and Addresses*—HEYDRICK
 English Poems—*From POPE, GRAY, GOLDSMITH, COLERIDGE, BYRON,*
MACAULAY, ARNOLD, and others—SCUDDER
 English Popular Ballads—HART
 Essays—English and American—ALDEN
 Familiar Letters, English and American—GREENLAW
 FRANKLIN—*Autobiography*—GRIFFIN
 French Short Stories—SCHWEIKERT
 GASKELL (Mrs.)—*Cranford*—HANCOCK
 GOLDSMITH—*The Vicar of Wakefield*—MORTON
 HAWTHORNE—*The House of the Seven Gables*—HERRICK
 HAWTHORNE—*Twice-Told Tales*—HERRICK AND BRUERE
 HUGHES—*Tom Brown's School Days*—DE MILLE
 IRVING—*Life of Goldsmith*—KRAPP
 IRVING—*The Sketch Book*—KRAPP

829. 11
C
The Lake English Classics

REVISED EDITION WITH HELPS TO STUDY

A BOOK of
MODERN PLAYS

EDITED FOR SCHOOL USE

BY

GEORGE R. COFFMAN

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH, BOSTON UNIVERSITY

SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY
CHICAGO ATLANTA NEW YORK

Wingate College Library

Copyright, 1925, by

SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY

For permission to use copyrighted material grateful acknowledgment is made to Small, Maynard and Company for extracts from *Play-Making* by William Archer; to Brentano's for extracts from George Bernard Shaw's *Dramatic Opinions and Essays*; to George H. Doran Company for extracts from *The Truth about an Author* by Arnold Bennett, copyright 1911, and for extracts from *The Author's Craft* by Arnold Bennett, copyright 1914, George H. Doran Company, publishers; to G. P. Putnam's Sons for extracts from *Our Irish Theatre* by Lady Gregory; to Duffield and Company for extracts from *Letters of Henrik Ibsen*, translated by John Nilsen Laurvik and Mary Morison; to the Crowell Publishing Company for an extract from "The Extraordinary Story of Eugene O'Neill" by Mary B. Mullett in the *American Magazine*, November, 1922; to William Heinemann for extracts from *Real Conversations* by William Archer; to Messrs. Constable, and the author, for an extract from *John M. Synge and the Irish Theatre* by Maurice Bourgeois; and to Macmillan and Company, London, for extracts from *The Drama of Yesterday and Today* by Clement Scott.

The extracts from *Dramatic Technique* by George P. Baker are used by permission of and by special arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers; also two paragraphs from Matthews's *The Study of the Drama*.

Full acknowledgments for permission to reproduce the plays in this text are made on the half-title pages preceding the plays themselves. It should be noticed that these plays are fully protected by the copyright laws and may not lawfully be produced or read publicly unless permission is obtained from the holders of the copyright.

PREFACE

The editor of the plays in this text assumes that they are *literature* as well as *stage productions*. As such they are intended primarily for discussion in the classroom, though they may be assigned merely for outside reading and reports. The questions and suggestions listed at the close of each play are intended to serve as a basis for discussions concerning the technique and significance of the literary production; and the topics indicated suggest possibilities for oral and written work. The introductory sketches and the suggested additional readings in connection with each play are designed to assist toward a more intelligent interpretation of the drama as literature and to enrich the student's literary background. At all times giving analysis and judgment concerning the play has been purposely avoided. The aim has been rather to furnish the materials through which the student may be enabled to form his own conclusions. Through assigning parts for reading in the classroom the teacher will find an excellent opportunity to test the student's ability to interpret the author's meaning and to comprehend the character that he is representing for the moment.

The plays included represent certain distinctive points of view, though they make no pretension to being a comprehensive collection of modern dramas. *Caste* bridges the gap in English drama between Sheridan and Goldsmith on the one hand and modern drama on the other. *Milestones* is a good example of a modern social problem play without the unpleasant and often undesirable elements so prominent in plays of the past thirty years. *The Workhouse War* and *Riders to the Sea* illustrate the folk element in modern drama. O'Neill's *Where the Cross Is Made* is chosen partly because of its element of mystery and adventure. *An Enemy of the People* is a social play with a distinct thesis and treats of a

universal problem of lively contemporary interest. Ibsen, the author, more than any other individual has shaped the course which modern drama has taken. *The Romancers* is one of the best examples in modern drama of the romantic play in light satiric vein. We realize, in such cases as Ibsen's, that a translation does not do justice to the original; but through translation a much larger group than otherwise could possibly do so comes to know something of significant foreign authors.

GEORGE R. COFFMAN

June, 1925

CONTENTS

Page

3

PREFACE.....	3
--------------	---

INTRODUCTION

I. APPROACH TO DRAMA.....	7
II. DEFINITIONS.....	13

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

I. SELECTED BOOKS ON THE TECHNIQUE OF THE DRAMA.....	17
II. HELPFUL BOOKS FOR AMATEUR PRODUCERS OF PLAYS.....	18

CASTE.....	<i>Thomas William Robertson.</i>	19
------------	----------------------------------	----

INTRODUCTION TO CASTE

I. Thomas William Robertson (1829-1871).....	21
II. A Forerunner of the Moderns.....	23

TEXT OF THE PLAY.....	27
-----------------------	----

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	109
-------------------	-----

MILESTONES.....	<i>Arnold Bennett and Edward Knoblock.....</i>	111
-----------------	--	-----

INTRODUCTION TO MILESTONES

I. Enoch Arnold Bennett (1867-).....	113
II. Edward Knoblock (1874-).....	115
III. Changes in the Drama between 1867 and 1912	116
IV. <i>Milestones</i> Considered As Social Drama.....	117

TEXT OF THE PLAY.....	119
-----------------------	-----

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	212
-------------------	-----

	Page
RIDERS TO THE SEA..... <i>John M. Synge</i>	217
INTRODUCTION TO <i>RIDERS TO THE SEA</i>	
I. John M. Synge (1871-1909).....	219
II. The Irish Drama.....	221
TEXT OF THE PLAY.....	225
THE WORKHOUSE WARD.... <i>Lady Gregory</i> ..	241
INTRODUCTION TO <i>THE WORKHOUSE WARD</i>	
Lady Gregory (1859-).....	243
TEXT OF THE PLAY.....	247
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE CELTIC RENAISSANCE AND IRISH DRAMA.....	261
WHERE THE CROSS IS MADE.. <i>Eugene O'Neill</i>	265
INTRODUCTION TO <i>WHERE THE CROSS IS MADE</i>	
I. Eugene O'Neill (1888-).....	267
II. American Drama—Background for O'Neill...	269
TEXT OF THE PLAY.....	273
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	297
AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE.. <i>Henrik Ibsen</i>	301
INTRODUCTION TO <i>AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE</i>	
I. Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906).....	303
II. Ibsen the Realist.....	304
TEXT OF THE PLAY.....	309
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	428
THE ROMANCERS..... <i>Edmond Rostand</i>	431
INTRODUCTION TO <i>THE ROMANCERS</i>	
I. Edmond Rostand (1868-1918).....	433
II. Romanticism in Modern Drama.....	433
III. <i>The Romancers</i> As Romantic Drama.....	434
TEXT OF THE PLAY.....	437
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	489

INTRODUCTION

I. APPROACH TO DRAMA

Drama is one division of the large general body of literature called narrative. This includes autobiography, biography, material from history, ordinary or extraordinary events related exactly as they occurred in life, the short story, and the novel. In all of these we are interested in what happens, in a sequence of events. These events may work to a climax—that is, to a very high degree of interest, a crisis for the principal character or characters, or a turning point in the main situation—and thus have the complication of a plot, as in Poe's *The Pit and the Pendulum*; or they may merely follow an orderly sequence and come to a normal close, as in Stevenson's *Will o' the Mill*. But whatever the author's purpose may have been in developing the situation, the average reader or spectator follows it primarily because of his interest in the story which is unfolded. Because the drama is one of the most artistic literary types, the writer of drama, like the writer of the short story—the narrative form to which the play is most nearly analogous—must create in his audience a singleness of impression, a sense of unity as to character or situation; otherwise the final impression will be confused and blurred.

Again, drama is a form of narrative which is written to be presented. When the intention of the author is carried out, we have a literary product which approximates most nearly to giving the illusion of life itself. This may be the illusion of life in an imaginary world, as in Maeterlinck's *The Blue Bird*; or it may be that of life in a small town in the Middle West, as in Zona Gale's *Neighbors*. But in order to create the illusion it is necessary to employ, in addition to the literary art, other arts and mechanical appliances, such as costuming,

scenery, dancing, music, lighting, and acting. As a result of these devices which assist the imagination in creating the illusion, many people who find little pleasure in reading stories, novels, or plays enjoy seeing drama presented.

But most people, even those who keenly enjoy the reading of fiction, find it necessary to cultivate a taste for the reading of plays. Where the story describes in detail, analyzes motives, or explains the reasons for certain actions, the play forces the reader constantly to imagine, to visualize the setting with only the help of stage directions, to comprehend motives from conversation, and to follow the thread of the narrative as it is interpreted and revealed through dialogue. And just because it is impossible for the average person to see many plays produced—if indeed he has the opportunity to see modern plays at all—he must read drama if he wishes to become familiar with a great deal of the best modern literature. In developing the ability to enjoy drama as well as fiction in leisure hours, one will often find that a careful reading of stage directions—which are very detailed in most modern plays—and the occasional sketching of an outline of the scene will assist a great deal. Reading aloud, alone or with a group, also helps to make the situation real and vivid.

Though drama contains the narrative element, its art is in many respects different from that of the short story or the novel. The statement of Professor Baker, the most successful teacher of dramatic composition in this country, indicates one of the essential differences and gives emphasis to the main idea of the preceding paragraph: "The novel is, so to speak, the work of an individual; a play is a co-operative effort—of author, actor, producer, and even audience. Though the author writes the play, it cannot be properly judged till the producer stages it, the players act it, and the audience approves or disapproves of it. Undeniably the dialogue of a play must be very different from that of a novel, because the gesture, facial expression, intonation, and general movement of the actor may in large part replace description, narration, and even parts of the dialogue of a novel. . . . It is in large part just because dramatic

dialogue is a kind of shorthand written by the dramatist for the actor to fill out that most persons find plays more difficult reading than novels. Few untrained imaginations respond quickly enough to the full significance of the printed page of the play. On the other hand, anyone accustomed to read plays often finds novels irritating because they tell so much more than is necessary for him who responds quickly to emotionalized speech properly recorded."¹

Reduced to essentials, the requirements of drama are: action, representation or characterization, and dialogue. That is, something must happen for the audience through the medium of actors who carry on conversation with one another. But the essence of a play consists in the appeal to one's emotions. "A play exists to create emotional responses in an audience."² Usually this emotion is aroused through some conflict. This may be between two groups, between two individuals, between an individual and a social law or an institution, or it may be within oneself. Or there may be an emotional appeal to the audience without a conflict. And this emotional appeal, of whatever kind it is, we call dramatic. Professor Baker, rephrasing a statement by William Archer in *Play-Making*, defines the terms as follows: "That is dramatic which, by representation of imaginary personages, interests, through its emotions, an average audience assembled in a theatre."³

Though it is distinctly true that the average person enjoys primarily what happens in the play, the story, to the student of the drama, is only one factor in his enjoyment. Especially is this true in modern drama, for to many contemporary dramatists the play is merely a medium for presenting to the public some serious idea—a criticism of the existing social order, an exposure of some of the evils or weaknesses in such institutions as the family, the church, business, or the state, or a suggestion by which reforms may be effected. Ibsen's *An*

1. G. P. Baker, *Dramatic Technique* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1919). page 11.

2. Baker, *ibid.*, page 43.

3. Baker, *ibid.*, page 45.

Enemy of the People illustrates the necessity of such an approach for adequate interpretation. And in a more specific manner, for the understanding of much of the content of Bennett and Knoblock's *Milestones* one must have some knowledge of the history of the period included within the play, of the social and economic environment of which it purports to be a reflection. In the same connection, information concerning the attitude of the people toward the drama during the mid-Victorian period will help one to appreciate the situation presented in Robertson's *Caste*.

Further, the reaction of the individual author—his incentive for writing the play, the suggestion which gave him his plot, his attitude as an artist toward his materials—is often of much significance as well as interest to one who is making a study of drama. Such knowledge enriches for the student the content of Lady Gregory's *The Workhouse Ward*, Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*, and Bennett and Knoblock's *Milestones*.

Aside from such material—the background against which the play is projected—one should find the author's judgment of character and his philosophy of life of great significance in any interpretation. The dramatist who creates in his spectators or his readers the illusion that his characters are real people, and that their actions are such as one would normally expect of them in life has what the critic calls a sense of integrity in his treatment. It is on the basis of this and the style or manner of expression of his material that one judges whether a dramatist rises to the standard of an artist. In the case of the great artist one *accepts* the illusion. For example, students of Shakespeare do not concern themselves primarily with *whether* Hamlet acts as he normally would in life, but with *why* he acts as he does. So the important consideration in *Where the Cross Is Made* is whether O'Neill makes the old sea captain real and whether he appears to act as one obsessed with the mirage of a hidden treasure would act. And does one find in Rostand's *The Romancers* that sprightly satire on youthful love, a sense of the illusion of reality?

Turning to a discussion of the plays in this text, one discovers that *Caste* in some of its aspects represents the spirit of mid-Victorianism. Contrary to the ways of Queen Elizabeth and her court, who fostered the drama, Queen Victoria and the great middle class of her day questioned and suspected it. This attitude is one of the reasons for the distinction in caste between George D'Alroy and the Eccles family, who are of the theatre. The play represents the mid-Victorian spirit, also, in the triumph of sentimentalism—in the assumption that human nature is always fundamentally good; that kindness, generosity, and the spirit of forgiveness triumph over selfishness, pride, and snobbery. This point of view prevailed in a great deal of the literature of the period. It is expressed in the lines from Tennyson quoted by the hero of the play:

Kind hearts are more than coronets
And simple faith than Norman blood.¹

In the aspects here summarized the play is not modern; but in certain other fundamental aspects it represents in content, spirit, and form a distinct transition to modern drama. Though it is only a coincidence that the date of its appearance (1867) was the same as that of the great Reform Bill which gave the vote to the working classes in the towns of England, there is a distinct relationship between certain features of the play and the modern social idea. Eccles and Sam Gerridge exemplify a bit of the spirit of the proletariat who have become dominant in the economic life and the drama of the later nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Furthermore, the facts that the play attempts to treat the everyday life of the lower middle class, that there is involved a social problem (the breaking of the barriers of caste), and that the language approximates that of ordinary conversation justify the claim that *Caste* is a transitional play the forerunner of modern English drama. For the most pronounced characteristics of the English drama of the nineteenth

1. "Lady Clara Vere de Vere," lines 55-56.

century until the appearance of *Caste* were a tendency to artificiality in conversation and subject-matter in treating ordinary themes, and an employment of romantic themes and language foreign to everyday life.¹

To a high degree *Milestones* epitomizes certain aspects of the changing economic and social order between the years 1860 and 1912. John Rhead with his faith in the future of iron ships, Arthur Preece with his new scientific process for the manufacture of a lighter steel, and Richard Sibley with his new reaping-machines to be used on the Canadian wheat farms are only three individuals in the great efficient machine of industrial organization which is the crowning material glory of the reign of Queen Victoria. And the social ideas of Arthur Preece, which aroused the wrath of John Rhead, are only a reflection of the English social program of the past forty years—a program which has brought about the dominance of the proletariat and effected revolutionary reforms of a startling nature in the relations of capital and labor. One finds in this play, also, more than a suggestion of the Woman's Movement, a phase of which in English life came with the passing of the equal franchise bill by Parliament in 1918. In a word, this play, a modern "social thesis" play, epitomizes the development of industrialism and of a new social ideal in England during a period of fifty years.

From the nineteenth century down to our day there has been a constant tendency to subordinate the individual to machinery and to organizations—political, industrial, and social—and to rely on the judgment of the democracy, the liberal majority. Against this tendency some arose in revolt. They protested against the power of the autocracy; they questioned the judgment of the democracy; they exposed the lack of sincerity in the liberal majority. Ibsen in *An Enemy of the People* is the leader of this group. He represents a reaction against organization, against the suppression of the individual. At the end of the play he says that the "compact

1. See T. H. Dickinson, *The Contemporary Drama of England* (Little, Brown and Company, 1917); and M. J. Moses, *Representative British Dramas—Victorian and Modern* (Little, Brown and Company, 1918).

majority" will fail one; and he only is strong who can stand alone.

Lady Gregory and Synge represent an aspect of the modern movement included in *Milestones*. Their return to the *folk*¹ to find material for their plays is only another phase of the spirit of democracy, of interest in the life of the proletariat.

O'Neill and Rostand have not the immediacy of relationship discoverable in the plays just passed in review. Their plays are not so obviously a product of our social order. They are not problem plays in the modern sense. O'Neill is essentially a romantic, searching for the unusual and the unexplored within man himself. He is interested in the struggle of man with himself as well as against his environment. His is the problem of an individual dominated by an obsession. It is an elemental problem. It is universal. It concerns any time. But Rostand's world is one in which the modern social problems are non-existent.

This is not the place for an extended discussion of the technique of modern drama. In general, since the most popular kind of play during the past thirty or forty years has been realistic, the prevailing technique in dialogue, situation, setting, and characterization has had as its aim the illusion of ordinary, everyday life. For detailed study of the technique of modern drama the reader is referred to the bibliography on that topic following this introduction.

II. DEFINITIONS

The following are definitions of some of the terms more or less frequently employed in the discussion of the plays in this text. Where an author's name occurs it refers to his volume listed under the bibliography on page 17.

Business. "By *business* is meant ordinarily either illustrative action called for by stage directions or clearly implied in the text" (Baker, page 275).

1. *Folk play*, as used in this text, is a play which has as its subject the lives and interests of the common or unsophisticated people.

Climax. "The point of greatest intensity reached in an incident, scene, act, or play is the moment of climax" (Baker, page 215).

Coincidence. Coincidence in drama is such a combination of unexpected and improbable chances at the same time and place as assists in complicating or unraveling the plot. Thus "Mr. Bernard Shaw has based the action of *You Never Can Tell* on the amazing coincidence that Mrs. Clandon and her children coming to England after eighteen years' absence, should by pure chance run straight into the arms, or rather into the teeth, of the husband and father, whom the mother, at any rate, only wishes to avoid" (Archer, pages 294-295). "Coincidences become the more improbable in the direct ratio of their importance."

Comedy. Comedy is that type of play in which the prevailing mood is cheerful, in which characterization is most important, and in which the conflict is so equalized that the hero wins. When the author in such a play satirizes contemporary society so as to make us see its faults and foibles, comedy of manners results. Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* is a good example of comedy of manners.

Conventions. "[Conventions] are tacit agreements between the artist and the public that if he shall be authorized to ignore certain of the mere facts he will do his best to present the truth as he sees it. . . . The necessary conventions of the drama are the result of three conditions of theatrical performances. The first of these is that the dramatist has at his disposal only a limited time—two or three hours at the most; and he is therefore compelled to select rigorously the vital elements of his theme and to compact his dialogue out of all resemblance to the ample and repetitious speech of ordinary life. The second and third are the obligation so to handle his story that everything done on the stage can be seen by the spectators in the theatre, and that everything said on the stage can be heard by the audience" (Matthews, pages 134-135). For extended discussion of the conventions of drama see Francisque Sarcey, *A Theory of the Theatre* (Publications of the Dramatic Museum of Columbia University, 1916).

Curtain. This is the moment at the close of an act just as the dropping of the curtain shuts off the scene from the audience. Dramatically this is often important in relation to the following scenes or to the final effect.

Dramatic. "That is dramatic which by representation of imaginary personages interests, through its emotions, an average audience assembled in a theatre" (Baker, page 45).

Expository Material. This consists of facts or material essentially not dramatic which must be conveyed to the audience by the actors for a proper understanding of the play.

Farce. Farce is comedy of situation; comedy of the improbable, the exaggerated, the ludicrous. "[It] is a comedy which is amusing from its . . . intricate development of tangled situations rather than character drawing, which is the basis of comedy."

Melodrama. Originally the term meant "a kind of drama commonly romantic and emotional in character with both song and instrumental music interspersed." At the present time it is applied to a serious play in which "the plot, the situation, the incidents are the controlling factors, and the characters are only what the plot allows them to be." One often associates melodrama and happy endings. Though happy endings are not at all necessary to melodrama, they are quite frequently employed as a concession to popular demand, contrary to the serious or tragic ending one logically expects.

Obligatory Scene. This is "a scene which, for one reason or another, an audience expects and ardently desires" (Archer, page 227). One would call the announcement to Macbeth of the coming of Birnam Wood to Dunsinane and his consequent defeat an obligatory scene.

Preparation. "[The younger Dumas declared that] the art of the dramatist is the art of preparation chiefly, and that every scene should be led up to so adroitly that the spectator expects it vaguely and welcomes it warmly" (Matthews, page 183).

Properties. Requisites for the production of a play—such as furniture, ornaments, books, etc. Formerly the term included also scenery and costumes.

Realism. This is a term applied to modern narrative or dramatic literature in which the author attempts to create the illusion of everyday life through artistic and unified selection of contemporary material. Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*, which will be found on pages 311-426, is an illustration of realistic drama.

Romanticism. Romanticism in literature consists of the discovery of the unusual in life. It represents an escape from the commonplaceness, the monotony, or the sordidness of ordinary life. Rostand's play in this text, found on pages 437-488, is a good example of romantic drama.

Scene. "In English theatrical usage today, and increasingly the world over, [scene] signifies 'a change of setting.' All that happens from one change of set to another makes a scene. French usage, based on Latin, till very recently always marked off a scene when any person more important than a servant or attendant entered or left the stage" (Baker, page 130).

Sentimentalism. Sentimentalism is based on the doctrine of the essential goodness of human nature. It assumes that virtue, kindness, generosity, and forgiveness will in the end prevail over vice, unkindness, selfishness, and revenge. This doctrine, as exemplified in many nineteenth-century and present-day popular plays and novels or short stories leads to unnatural or forced happy endings and reconciliations. Melodrama treating of domestic life often illustrates sentimentalism.

Technique. "The technique of any dramatist may be defined, roughly, as his ways, methods, and devices for getting his desired ends" (Baker, page 1).

Theatric. "Theatric does not necessarily mean *sensational, melodramatic, artificial*. It should mean . . . *adapted for the purpose of the theatre*" (Baker, page 45).

Tragedy. Tragedy is that type of play in which the prevailing mood is serious, in which characterization is most important, and in which "the obstacle which the hero is striving to overcome is insurmountable."

Up Stage. This is a position to the rear of the stage.

Down Stage. This is a position near the footlights.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES*

I. A FEW SELECTED BOOKS ON THE TECHNIQUE
OF THE DRAMA

During the past ten or fifteen years a great deal has been written concerning the construction of the play both from the point of view of the average person who would become an intelligent reader or observer of plays and of the aspiring playwright. The following are a few of the most distinctive studies which have appeared.

William Archer, *Play-Making; A Manual of Craftsmanship* (Small, Maynard and Company, 1912). Technical but interesting enough in presentation to appeal to the average reader.

George P. Baker, *Dramatic Technique* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1919). This is a book definitely for the would-be dramatist, written by the most distinguished and successful teacher of dramatic composition in this country.

Richard Burton, *How to See a Play* (The Macmillan Company, 1914). A popular and interesting treatise on the structure of the play; intended for the average reader and playgoer.

Elizabeth R. Hunt, *The Play of Today* (John Lane Company, 1913). "Studies in play-structure for the student and the theatre-goer." A popular presentation indorsed by The Drama League of America and "commended to its members as one of the most valuable among recent publications on the subject and of special interest to all students of the Drama."

Benjamin R. Lewis, *Technique of the One-Act Play* (Luce and Company, 1918). An outgrowth of the author's experience as teacher of dramatic composition.

*Fuller bibliographies for the study of each author represented in this volume, together with suggestions for parallel reading, will be found following the various plays. The bibliographies for Synge and Lady Gregory are grouped together at the end of the latter's *The Workhouse Ward*.

Brander Matthews, *The Study of the Drama* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1910). Comprehensive and valuable. "It is intended, not for those who want to write plays, but for those who wish to learn how plays are written now, and how they have been written in the past."

II. HELPFUL BOOKS FOR AMATEUR PRODUCERS OF PLAYS

Since the plays in this text are intended for study and for discussion in the classroom, no space has been devoted to consideration of suggestions for producing them or other dramas. For those who are interested in amateur production the following books are suggested. Two or three of them, at least, should be in the library of every high school, town, and city.

Barrett H. Clark, *How to Produce Amateur Plays* (Little Brown and Company, 1917). Elementary.

C. J. de Goveia, *The Community Playhouse: A Manual of Its Organization and Maintenance* (B. W. Huebsch, 1923). Concrete and helpful.

Gertrude E. Johnson, *Choosing a Play* (The Century Company, 1920). Valuable primarily because of its bibliographies; it contains lists of publishers with addresses, classified lists of plays, and other helpful books.

Constance D'Arcy Mackay, *Costumes and Scenery for Amateurs* (Henry Holt and Company, 1915). Especially recommended as practical, by a producer of amateur plays.

Clarence Stratton, *Producing in Little Theatres* (Henry Holt and Company, 1921). By all odds the most comprehensive and helpful book for high-school directors on producing plays.

Emerson Taylor, *Practical Stage Directing for Amateurs* (E. P. Dutton and Company, 1916). The next most valuable handbook after Stratton's.

Note: Anyone interested in presenting plays should remember that the privilege of producing them is reserved by the authors or their representatives. The law provides penalties for producing copyright plays without securing the necessary permission and making proper arrangements.

CASTE

(1867)

BY

T. W. ROBERTSON

Caste is here reprinted by permission of D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, from the standard English text as edited in the *Belles-Lettres Series* by T. Edgar Pemberton. Certain footnotes also taken, by permission of the publishers, from this edition are indicated by the name *Pemberton* following such notes.

INTRODUCTION TO CASTE

I. THOMAS WILLIAM ROBERTSON (1829-1871)

Probably more than any other English dramatist T. W. Robertson was distinctly a man of the theatre. Its environment was his by inheritance, by birth, by the necessity of early training, and finally by professional choice. His parents, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather were actors. He was one of a large family, most of whom became actors; and he himself, with the exception of a few years during his boyhood, was connected with the stage. To use his own expression, he "was nursed on rose-pink and cradled in properties."

Robertson was born in Nottinghamshire, England, in 1829. At the time, his father was a member of the Lincoln circuit company, one of the groups of traveling players in England during the early nineteenth century. Going from town to town in the circuit, remaining "three or four weeks in each town, returning for any special occasion, such as fair or race week," the family lived a semi-gypsy life. Very early Thomas played children's parts and assisted in other ways around the theatre. From 1836 to 1844 he attended Spalding and Whittlesea academies. Then, because the circuit was not going well, the boy was called home to help. During the next four years he acted, managed, prompted, painted scenery, wrote songs and vaudeville skits, and adapted stories for presentation—in fact did anything and everything about the theatre. He played all kinds of parts—from "*Hamlet* to low comedy."

In this period, continuing his education under his father, Robertson became proficient in French, an accomplishment which he used later in his hack work as translator of French plays for the English stage.

After a few weeks of very unpleasant experience as a subordinate teacher in an academy in Utrecht, Holland, in 1848,

he managed to get back to England through the assistance of the British Consul. Shortly after his return, the Lincoln circuit had to be abandoned, partially at least because the coming of railroads made communication with larger places possible.

The nineteen-year-old Robertson then went up to London, where, following the tradition concerning Shakespeare, he did anything around the theatre he could find to do. During the next seven years he wrote plays and tried to get them produced, tried to enlist in the army, and was prompter and actor in London theatres. In 1855 he went to Paris as one of an English company in *Macbeth*. The project ended in failure within a week, and Robertson returned to the London stage. Shortly afterwards he met Miss Elizabeth Burton, an actress, whom he married in 1856. From 1856 to 1865 he led the precarious existence of actor in Dublin, the provinces, and London; he was a hack writer; and he translated plays from the French, wrote original plays, and did sketches and stories for magazines. During these years his greatest inspiration came from a group of literary men who met on Friday nights at the home of Thomas Hood, the poet, at that time editor of *Fun*. A member of that group tells of these meetings:

Thomas Hood's Friday Nights became a great, and, I think, a valuable institution. Assisted by his good-natured and enthusiastic wife, we were provided every Friday with a plain, old-fashioned supper of cold roast beef, salad, bread and cheese, potatoes in their jackets, and whatever we wanted to smoke or drink in reason. . . . We came to talk of literature, to discuss the books we had read, or the plays we had seen, to hear good music, to crack jokes, to tell good stories, and to plan out periodicals, destined, of course, to make the fortunes of all of us, which doubtless would have been the case had any of us possessed one farthing of capital. . . . Here Tom Robertson would enchant us with his pathetic stories of the stage, and inveigh against the manager, whether actor or not it did not matter; here Escott led us to higher literature and recited his favorite poems; here Jack Brough talked chemistry, and E. C. Barnes art; and when the new day was breaking we went eastward

with the market carts up Piccadilly, and felt all of us that we had not at least wasted one day that we valued in the busy week. (Clement Scott: *The Drama of Yesterday and Today*, Volume I, pages 480-481.)

Robertson's success and popularity came with the production of *Society* (1865), a play which one of the established London managers pronounced "rubbish," but which ran one hundred fifty nights when Marie Wilton produced it at the Prince of Wales' Theatre. This was followed by *Ours* (1866), *Caste* (1867), *Play* (1868), and *School* (1869.) This last ran nearly four hundred nights.

Robertson's first wife died in 1865. He was married again in 1867 to Miss Rosetta Faust. His death occurred February 3, 1871.

II. A FORERUNNER OF THE MODERNS

In the history of English literature Robertson belongs to the mid-Victorians, being contemporary with Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Browning, Tennyson, Arnold, Ruskin, Morris, Swinburne, and the Rossettis. But we do not think of him primarily as one of this group, or essentially as a Victorian. We think of him almost exclusively in connection with the history of English drama. And the fact that his name looks strange in this roll of literary leaders merely suggests the status of mid-nineteenth-century English drama. In addition to, and partially as a result of the Victorian puritanism, which was opposed to the stage, there were pantomime, vaudeville, farce, tawdry or flamboyant melodrama, and animal shows of various kinds which helped to the degradation and decadence of English drama in the fifties and sixties. The condition of actors of legitimate drama during this period and the attitude of certain classes toward the profession are well presented in Robertson's *Caste* and in Pinero's *Trelawney of the "Wells."* Since that time many forces and many individuals have contributed to restore drama to the honored place it holds in the literary world and the public esteem today; but more than any other single

English dramatist Robertson is responsible for initiating this change.

In the history of the English drama he is the forerunner of the moderns. He is the earliest outstanding figure in that transitional group represented by such men as Oscar Wilde, Henry Arthur Jones, and Arthur Wing Pinero. Shaw acknowledges his early indebtedness to him; and Pinero "always avows himself one of Robertson's stanchest disciples and admirers." Robertson takes his place as a forerunner of the modern dramatists because his ideal was to portray the manners of his time—to present situations, characters, and conversation as one would find them in everyday life. All this included the ideal of natural acting and careful regard to realistic details of setting. In this connection an excerpt from Shaw's dramatic criticism on the revival of *Caste* at the Court Theatre in 1897 is pertinent. He is referring to the state of drama in Robertson's day:

After years of sham heroics and superhuman balderdash, *Caste* delighted everyone by its freshness, its nature, its humanity. You will shriek and snort, O scornful young men, at this monstrous assertion. "Nature! Freshness!" you will exclaim. "In Heaven's name . . . where is there a touch of nature in *Caste*?" I reply, "In the windows, in the doors, in the walls, in the carpet, in the ceiling, in the kettle, in the fireplace, in the ham, in the tea, in the bread and butter, in the bassinet, in the hats and sticks and clothes, in the familiar phrases, the quiet, unpumped, everyday utterance; in short, in the commonplaces that are now spurned because they are commonplaces, and were then inexpressibly welcome because they were the most unexpected of novelties." (G. B. Shaw: *Dramatic Opinions and Essays*, Brentano's, 1907, Volume II, page 283.)

To Shaw's opinion it is fitting to add that presented by William Archer, "the father of modern dramatic criticism," in England.

WILLIAM ARCHER. He [Robertson] was a great stage manager, was he not?

MR. GILBERT. A great stage manager. Why, he invented stage management. It was an unknown art before his time.

Formerly, in a conversation scene for instance, you simply brought down two or three chairs from the flat and placed them in a row in the middle of the stage, and the people sat down and talked, and then the chairs were replaced. Robertson showed how to give life and variety and nature to the scene, by breaking it up with all sorts of little incidents and by-play. I have been at many of his rehearsals and have learned a great deal from them. (William Archer: *Real Conversations*, William Heinemann, 1904: Conversation VI, with W. S. Gilbert, page 114.)

In the case of characters and amusing situations with which Robertson was familiar, such as the Bohemian group and their life in *Society* or the Eccles family and Sam Gerridge in *Caste*, he succeeded admirably. But he often failed in his analysis and interpretation of characters outside his limited range. Illustrations of this we find in Lady Ptarmigan in *Society* and the Marquise de St. Maur in *Caste*; and in the rather forced and wholesale reconciliations at the close of both plays. This is no doubt in part due to the Mid-Victorian convention of sentimentalism. What one means by sentimentalism, or the doctrine of the essential goodness of human nature, is probably best defined as applied to Robertson by his son in his introduction to his father's memoirs:

Robertson's plays were founded on the single principle of virtuous intentions. His heroes were manly, his heroines were pure. A spirit of chivalry pervaded his whole composition, and nothing in word or action can be found in any way indicative of a contrary meaning. . . . The comedies which made Robertson's name famous represented events and emotions as expressed by men and women of the day with the same remarkable fidelity and minute skill—holding up the mirror to society and reflecting it in its kindest phases.

Because of his simple doctrine and his kindly spirit as here expressed, his plays deal with the external rather than the inner life of his characters, and the best literary judgment of today is that he was often unsound in his analysis of characters in crises. He lacks the penetration, the incisiveness, the ability to estimate objectively rather than to sympathize with

his characters, qualities which one finds in such modern writers of English comedy as George Bernard Shaw, Granville Barker, St. John Hankin, and Henry Arthur Jones at his best. But among his contemporaries he stands distinctive as popularizing in the nineteenth century the middle-class comedy of home life—the originator of the “teacup and saucer” school of drama. In the last analysis he falls in with the Victorians in exalting and honoring domestic life. His friend Clement Scott fittingly epitomizes the contemporary estimate of the man:

Thus passed away the one author of my time who has had the greatest influence for good on the English stage. He kept it sweet and fresh and green and sunny. He always touched the major chords of love and faith and hope; never the jarring discord of hopelessness and misery and despair.

A reading list for Robertson and the drama of his time will be found on page 109.

CASTE*

ACT I

SCENE I. *A plain-set chamber, paper soiled. A window, with practicable blind; street backing and iron railings. Door practicable; when opened showing street door (practicable). Fireplace; two-hinged gas burners on each side of mantelpiece. Sideboard cupboard, cupboard in recess; tea-things: teapot, tea-caddy, tea-tray, etc., on it. Long table, before fire; old piece of carpet and rug down; plain chairs; bookshelf, back; a small table under it with ballet-shoe and skirt on it; bunch of benefit bills hanging under bookshelf. Theatrical printed portraits, framed, hanging about; chimney glass clock; box of lucifers and ornaments on mantelshelf; kettle on hob, and fire laid; doormats on the outside of door. Bureau in lower right-hand corner. Rapping heard at door; the handle is then shaken as curtain rises. The door is unlocked. Enter GEORGE D'ALROY.*

GEORGE D'ALROY. Told you so; the key was left under the mat in case I came. They're not back from rehearsal. [*Hangs up hat on peg near door as HAWTREE enters.*] Confound rehearsal! [*Crosses to fireplace.*]

HAWTREE [*back to audience, looking round*]. And this is the fairy's bower!

GEORGE. Yes; and this is the fairy's fireplace; the fire is laid. I'll light it. [*Lights fire with lucifer from mantelpiece.*]

*Copyright, 1905, by D. C. Heath and Company. All rights reserved.

Stage direction. *benefit bills*, playbills used in connection with benefit performances for actors, actresses, or playwrights. Hence, they would be very elaborate and expensive. For a discussion of benefit performances during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries see, in the Index, Alwin Thaler, *From Shakespeare to Sheridan*, under *Post-Restoration Playwrights*.

HAWTREE [*turning to GEORGE*]. And this is the abode rendered blessed by her abiding. It is here that she dwells, walks, talks—eats and drinks. Does she eat and drink?

GEORGE. Yes, heartily. I've seen her.

5 HAWTREE. And you are really spoons!—case of true love—hit—dead.

GEORGE. Right through. Can't live away from her. [*With elbow on end of mantelpiece, down stage*]

HAWTREE. Poor old Dal! and you've brought me over
10 the water to—

GEORGE. Stangate.

HAWTREE. Stangate—to see her for the same sort of reason that when a patient is in a dangerous state one doctor calls in another—for a consultation.

15 GEORGE. Yes. Then the patient dies.

HAWTREE. Tell us all about it—you know I've been away. [*Sits at table, leg on chair.*]

GEORGE. Well then, eighteen months ago—

HAWTREE. Oh cut that! You told me all about that.
20 You went to a theatre, and saw a girl in a ballet, and you fell in love.

GEORGE. Yes. I found out that she was an amiable, good girl.

HAWTREE. Of course; cut that. We'll credit her with all
25 the virtues and accomplishments.

GEORGE. Who worked hard to support a drunken father.

HAWTREE. Oh! the father's a drunkard, is he? The father does not inherit the daughter's virtues?

GEORGE. No. I hate him.

30 HAWTREE. Naturally. Quite so! Quite so!

11. *Stangate*. "Stangate, in which the little house of the Eccles group was supposed to be situated, is a sort of yard at the rear of that place of entertainment in the Westminster Bridge Road which was for so many years known as Astley's Amphitheatre. It was there, no doubt, that Esther Eccles danced, and the place was sadly associated in Robertson's mind with the fact that it was on those very boards that . . . his first wife fulfilled the trying engagement that preceded her fatal illness. . . ." (*Pemberton*.)

GEORGE. And she—that is, Esther—is very good to her younger sister.

HAWTREE. Younger sister also angelic, amiable, accomplished, etc.?

GEORGE. Um—good enough, but got a temper—large 5 temper. Well, with some difficulty, I got to speak to her. I mean to Esther. Then I was allowed to see her to her door here.

HAWTREE. I know—pastry-cooks—Richmond dinner—
and all that. 10

GEORGE. You're too fast. Pastry-cooks—yes. Richmond—no. Your knowledge of the world, fifty yards round barracks, misleads you. I saw her nearly every day, and I kept on falling in love—falling and falling, until I thought I should never reach the bottom; then I met you. 15

HAWTREE. I remember the night when you told me; but I thought it was only an amourette. However, if the fire is a conflagration, subdue it; try dissipation.

GEORGE. I have.

HAWTREE. What success? 20

GEORGE. None; dissipation brought me bad health and self-contempt, a sick head and a sore heart.

HAWTREE. Foreign travel; absence makes the heart grow [slight pause]—stronger. Get leave and cut away.

GEORGE. I did get leave, and I did cut away; and while 25 away I was miserable and a gone-er coon than ever.

HAWTREE. What's to be done? [Sits cross-legged on chair, facing GEORGE.]

GEORGE. Don't know. That's the reason I asked you to come over and see. 30

HAWTREE. Of course, Dal, you're not such a soft as to think of marriage. You know what your mother is. Either

9. *Richmond*. Richmond is a town in Surrey, England, on the south bank of the Thames. It "is a favorite summer resort, and its whitebait dinners at the Star and Garter are noted" (*The Century Cyclopedia of Names*).

you are going to behave properly, with a proper regard for the world, and all that, you know, or you're going to do the other thing. Now, the question is, what do you mean to do? The girl is a nice girl, no doubt; but as to your making her

5 Mrs. D'Alroy, the thing is out of the question.

GEORGE. Why? What should prevent me?

HAWTREE. Caste!—the inexorable law of caste. The social law, so becoming and so good, that commands like to mate with like, and forbids a giraffe to fall in love with a
10 squirrel.

GEORGE. But my dear Bark—

HAWTREE. My dear Dal, all those marriages of people with common people are all very well in novels and plays on the stage, because the real people don't exist, and have no
15 relatives who exist, and no connections, and so no harm's done, and it's rather interesting to look at; but in real life, with real relations and real mothers and so forth, it's absolute bosh; it's worse—it's utter social and personal annihilation and damnation.

20 GEORGE. As to my mother, I haven't thought about her.
[Sits on corner of table.]

HAWTREE. Of course not. Lovers are so damned selfish; they never think of anybody but themselves.

GEORGE. My father died when I was three years old,
25 and she married again before I was six, and married a Frenchman.

HAWTREE. A nobleman of the most ancient families of France, of equal blood to her own. She obeyed the duties imposed on her by her station and by caste.

30 GEORGE. Still, it caused a separation and a division between us, and I never see my brother, because he lives abroad. Of course the Marquise de St. Maur is my mother, and I look upon her with a sort of superstitious awe. [Moves chair, which he has been twisting about during speech, from
35 table to left corner.]

HAWTREE. She's a grand Brahmin priestess.

GEORGE. Just so; and I know I'm a fool. Now you're clever, Bark—a little too clever, I think. You're paying your devoirs—that's the correct word, isn't it?—to Lady Florence Carberry, the daughter of a countess. She's above you—you've no title. Is she to forget *her* caste?

HAWTREE. That argument doesn't apply. A man can be no more than a gentleman.

GEORGE.

"True hearts are more than coronets
And simple faith than Norman blood."

10

HAWTREE. Now, George, if you're going to consider this question from the point of view of poetry, you're off to No-Man's Land, where I won't follow you.

GEORGE. No gentleman can be ashamed of the woman he loves. No matter what her original station, once his wife he raises her to his rank.

HAWTREE. Yes, he raises her—*her*; but her connections—her relatives. How about them? [ECCLES enters.]

ECCLES [outside]. Polly! Polly! Polly! [Enters.] Why the devil—

20

[GEORGE crosses to HAWTREE, who rises. ECCLES sees them and assumes a deferential manner.]

ECCLES. Oh, Mr. De-Alroy! I didn't see you, sir. Good afternoon; the same to you, sir, and many on 'em. [Puts hat on bureau and comes down.]

HAWTREE. Who is this?

GEORGE. This is papa.

25

HAWTREE. Ah! [Turns up to bookshelf, scanning ECCLES through eyeglass.]

GEORGE. Miss Eccles and her sister not returned from rehearsal yet?

1. *She's a grand Brahmin priestess.* A Brahmin is a person of the highest priestly caste among the Hindus; hence, George's mother is of the most exclusive caste.

9. *True hearts, etc.* This is from Tennyson's "Lady Clara Vere de Vere." Tennyson has "*Kind hearts.*"

ECCLES. No, sir, they have not. I expect 'em in directly. I hope you've been quite well since I seen you last, sir?

GEORGE. Quite, thank you; and how have you been, Mr. Eccles?

5 ECCLES. Well, sir, I have not been the thing at all. My 'elth, sir, and my spirits is both broke. I'm not the man I used to be. I am not accustomed to this sort of thing. I've seen better days, but they are gone—most like forever. It is a melancholy thing, sir, for a man of my time of life
10 to look back on better days that are gone most like forever.

GEORGE. I daresay.

ECCLES. Once proud and prosperous, now poor and lowly. Once master of a shop, I am now, by the pressure of circumstances over which I have no control, driven to
15 seek work and not to find it. Poverty is a dreadful thing, sir, for a man as has once been well off.

GEORGE. I daresay.

ECCLES [*sighing*]. Ah, sir, the poor and lowly is often 'ardly used. What chance has the workingman?

20 HAWTREE. None when he don't work.

ECCLES. We are all equal in mind and feeling.

GEORGE [*aside*]. I hope not.

ECCLES. I am sorry, gentlemen, that I cannot offer you any refreshment; but luxury and me has long been strangers.

25 GEORGE. I am very sorry for your misfortunes, Mr. Eccles. [*Looking round at HAWTREE, who turns away.*] May I hope that you will allow me to offer you this trifling loan? [*Giving him half a sovereign.*]

ECCLES. Sir, you're a gentleman. One can tell a real
30 gentleman with half a sov—I mean half an eye—a real gentleman understands the natural emotions of the workingman. Pride, sir, is a thing as should be put down by the strong 'and of pecuniary necessity. There's a friend of mine round the corner as I promised to meet on a little matter of
33 business; so if you will excuse me, sir—

GEORGE. With pleasure.

ECCLES [*going up*]. Sorry to leave you, gentlemen, but—

GEORGE. Don't stay on my account.

HAWTREE. Don't mention it.

ECCLES. Business is business. [*Goes up.*] The girls will 5
be in directly. Good afternoon, gentlemen—good afternoon
—[*going out*]. Good afternoon. [*Exit.*]

[GEORGE sits in chair, corner of table, right.]

HAWTREE [*coming down left of table*]. Papa is not nice,
but—[*sitting on corner of table down stage*]

“True hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.” 10

Poor George! I wonder what your mamma—the Most
Noble the Marquise de St. Maur—would think of Papa
Eccles. Come, Dal, allow that there *is something* in caste.
Conceive that dirty ruffian—that rinsing of stale beer— 15
that walking tap-room, for a father-in-law. Take a spin to
Central America. Forget her.

GEORGE. Can't.

HAWTREE. You'll be wretched and miserable with her.

GEORGE. I'd rather be wretched with her than miserable 20
without her. [HAWTREE takes out cigar case.] Don't smoke
here!

HAWTREE. Why not?

GEORGE. She'll be coming in directly.

HAWTREE. I don't think she'd mind. 25

GEORGE. I should. Do you smoke before Lady Florence
Carberry?

HAWTREE [*closing case*]. Ha! You're suffering from a fit
of the morals.

GEORGE. What's that? 30

HAWTREE. The morals is a disease, like the measles, that
attacks the young and innocent.

GEORGE [*with temper*]. You talk like Mephistopheles, without the cleverness. [*Goes up to window and looks at watch.*]

HAWTREE [*arranging cravat at glass*]. I don't pretend to
5 be a particularly good sort of fellow, nor a particularly bad sort of fellow. I suppose I'm about the average standard sort of thing, and I don't like to see a friend go down hill to the devil while I can put the drag on. [*Turning, with back to fire.*] Here is a girl of very humble station—poor, and all
10 that, with a drunken father, who evidently doesn't care how he gets money, so long as he don't work for it. Marriage! Pah! Couldn't the thing be arranged?

GEORGE. Hawtree, cut that! [*At window.*] She's here! [*Goes to door and opens it.*]

[*Enter ESTHER.*]

15 GEORGE [*flurried at sight of her*]. Good morning. I got here before you, you see.

ESTHER. Good morning. [*Sees HAWTREE—slight pause, in which HAWTREE has removed his hat.*]

GEORGE. I've taken the liberty—I hope you won't be
20 angry—of asking you to let me present a friend of mine to you; Miss Eccles—Captain Hawtree. [*HAWTREE bows.*
GEORGE assists ESTHER in taking off bonnet and shawl.]

HAWTREE [*aside*]. Pretty.

ESTHER [*aside*]. Thinks too much of himself.

25 GEORGE [*hangs up bonnet and shawl on pegs*]. You've had a late rehearsal. Where's Polly?

ESTHER. She stayed behind to buy something.

[*Enter POLLY.*]

POLLY [*head through door*]. How de do, Mr. D'Alroy? Oh! I'm tired to death. Kept at rehearsal by an old fool of
30 a stage manager. But stage managers are always old fools—except when they are young. We shan't have time for any dinner, so I've brought something for tea.

ESTHER. What is it?

POLLY. Ham. [*Showing ham in paper. ESTHER sits right, at window. Crossing. Seeing HAWTREE.*] Oh! I beg your pardon, sir. I didn't see you.

GEORGE. A friend of mine, Mary. Captain Hawtree— 5
Miss Mary Eccles.

[*GEORGE sits at window. POLLY bows very low, to left, to right, and to front, half burlesquely, to HAWTREE.*]

HAWTREE. Charmed.

POLLY [*aside*]. What a swell! Got nice teeth, and he knows it. [*Aloud.*] How quiet we all are; let's talk about something. [*Hangs up her hat. She crosses to fire round table, 10 front. HAWTREE crosses and places hat on bureau.*]

ESTHER. What can we talk about?

POLLY. Anything. Ham. Mr. D'Alroy, do you like ham?

GEORGE. I adore her—[*POLLY titters*—I mean I adore it. 15

POLLY [*to HAWTREE, who has crossed to table watching POLLY undo paper containing ham. She turns the plate on top of the ham still in the paper, then throws the paper aside and triumphantly brings the plate under HAWTREE'S nose, HAWTREE giving a little start back.*] Do you like ham, sir? 20
[*Very tragically.*]

HAWTREE. Yes.

POLLY. Now that is very strange. I should have thought you'd have been above ham. [*Getting tea-tray.*]

HAWTREE. May one ask why? 25

POLLY. You look above it. You look quite equal to tongue—glazed. [*Laughing.*] Mr. D'Alroy is here so often that he knows our ways. [*Getting tea-things from sideboard and placing them on table.*]

27. tongue—glazed, jellied tongue, a delicacy.

HAWTREE. I like everything that is piquant and fresh, and pretty and agreeable.

POLLY [*laying table all the time for tea*]. Ah! you mean that for me. [*Curtsying.*] Oh! [*Sings.*] Tra, la, la, la, la, 5 la. [*Flourishes cup in his face; he retreats a step.*] Now I must put the kettle on. [*GEORGE and ESTHER are at window.*] Esther never does any work when Mr. D'Alroy is here. They're spooning; ugly word, spooning, isn't it?—reminds one of red-currant jam. By the bye, love is very like red-
10 currant jam—at the first taste sweet, and afterwards shuddery. Do you ever spoon?

HAWTREE [*leaning across table*]. I should like to do so at this moment.

POLLY. I daresay you would. No, you're too grand for
15 me. You want taking down a peg—I mean a foot. Let's see—what are you—a corporal?

HAWTREE. Captain.

POLLY. I prefer a corporal. See here. Let's change about. You be corporal—it'll do you good, and I'll be “my
20 lady.”

HAWTREE. Pleasure.

POLLY. You must call me “my lady,” though, or you shan't have any ham.

HAWTREE. Certainly, “my lady”; but I cannot accept
25 your hospitality, for I'm engaged to dine.

POLLY. At what time?

HAWTREE. Seven.

POLLY. Seven! Why, that's half-past tea-time. Now, Corporal, you must wait on me.

30 HAWTREE. As the pages did of old.

POLLY. “My lady.”

HAWTREE. “My lady.”

POLLY. Here's the kettle, Corporal. [*Holding out kettle at arm's length.* HAWTREE looks at it through eyeglass.]

HAWTREE. Very nice kettle.

POLLY. Take it into the back kitchen.

HAWTREE. Eh!

POLLY. Oh, I'm coming too.

HAWTREE. Ah! that alters the case. [*He takes out handkerchief and then takes hold of kettle—crosses as GEORGE rises and comes down, slapping HAWTREE on back. HAWTREE immediately places kettle on the floor. POLLY throws herself into chair by fireside up stage, and roars with laughter. GEORGE and ESTHER laugh.*] 5

GEORGE. What are you about? 10

HAWTREE. I'm about to fill the kettle.

ESTHER [*going to POLLY*]. Mind what you are doing, Polly. What will Sam say?

POLLY. Whatever Sam chooses. What the sweetheart 15 can't see the husband can't grieve at. Now then—Corporal!

HAWTREE. "My lady!" [*Takes up kettle.*]

POLLY. Attention! Forward! March! and mind the soot don't drop upon your trousers. [*Exeunt POLLY and HAWTREE, HAWTREE first.*] 20

ESTHER. What a girl it is—all spirits! The worst is that it is so easy to mistake her.

GEORGE. And so easy to find out your mistake. .[*They cross down stage, ESTHER first.*] But why won't you let me present you with a piano? [*Following ESTHER.*] 25

ESTHER. I don't want one.

GEORGE. You said you were fond of playing.

ESTHER. We may be fond of many things without having them. [*Leaning against end of table. Taking out letter.*] Now here is a gentleman says he is attached to me. 30

GEORGE [*jealous*]. May I know his name?

ESTHER. What for? It would be useless, as his solicitations—. [*Throws letter into fire.*]

GEORGE. I lit that fire.

ESTHER. Then burn these, too. [GEORGE crosses to fire.]
No, not that. [Taking one back.] I must keep that; burn
the others. [GEORGE throws letters on fire, crosses back of
table quickly—takes hat from peg and goes to door as if leaving
5 hurriedly. ESTHER takes chair from table and goes to center of
stage with it, noticing GEORGE's manner. GEORGE hesitates
at door. Shuts it quickly, hangs his hat up again, and comes
down to back of chair in which ESTHER has seated herself.]

GEORGE. Who is that from?

10 ESTHER. Why do you wish to know?

GEORGE. Because I love you, and I don't think you love
me, and I fear a rival.

ESTHER. You have none.

GEORGE. I know you have so many admirers.

15 ESTHER. They're nothing to me.

GEORGE. Not one?

ESTHER. No. They're admirers, but there's not a hus-
band among them.

GEORGE. Not the writer of that letter?

20 ESTHER [coquettishly]. Oh, I like him very much.

GEORGE [sighing]. Ah!

ESTHER. And I'm very fond of this letter.

GEORGE. Then, Esther, you don't care for me.

ESTHER. Don't I? How do you know?

25 GEORGE. Because you won't let me read that letter.

ESTHER. It won't please you if you see it.

GEORGE. I daresay not. That's just the reason that I
want to. You won't?

ESTHER [hesitates]. I will. There! [Giving it to him.]

30 GEORGE [reads]. "Dear Madam."

ESTHER. That's tender, isn't it?

GEORGE. "The terms are four pounds—your dresses to
be found. For eight weeks certain, and longer if you should
suit. [In astonishment.] I cannot close the engagement
35 until the return of my partner. I expect him back today,

and I will write you as soon as I have seen him. Yours very," etc. Four pounds—find dresses. What does this mean?

ESTHER. It means that they want a Columbine for the Pantomime at Manchester, and I think I shall get the engagement. 5

GEORGE. Manchester; then you'll leave London?

ESTHER. I must. [*Pathetically.*] You see this little house is on my shoulders. Polly only earns eighteen shillings a week, and father has been out of work a long, long time. I make the bread here, and it's hard to make sometimes. I've 10 been mistress of this place, and forced to think ever since my mother died, and I was eight years old. Four pounds a week is a large sum, and I can save out of it. [*This speech is not to be spoken in a tone implying hardship.*]

GEORGE. But you'll go away, and I shan't see you. 15

ESTHER. P'raps it will be for the best. [*Rises and crosses.*] What future is there for us? You're a man of rank, and I am a poor girl who gets her living by dancing. It would have been better that we had never met.

GEORGE. No. 20

ESTHER. Yes, it would, for I'm afraid that—

GEORGE. You love me?

ESTHER. I don't know. I'm not sure; but I think I do. [*Stops and turns half-face to GEORGE.*]

GEORGE [*trying to seize her hand*]. Esther! 25

ESTHER. No. Think of the difference of our stations.

GEORGE. That's what Hawtree says! Caste! caste! curse caste! [*Goes up.*]

ESTHER. If I go to Manchester it will be for the best. We must both try to forget each other. 30

GEORGE [*comes down by table*]. Forget you! no, Esther: let me—. [*Seizing her hand.*]

POLLY [*without*]. Mind what you're about. Oh, dear! oh, dear!

3. *Columbine*, a conventional character in old Italian comedy.

[GEORGE and ESTHER sit in window seat. Enter POLLY and HAWTREE.]

POLLY. You nasty, great clumsy corporal, you've spilt the water all over my frock. Oh, dear! [*Coming down. HAWTREE puts kettle on ham on table.*] Take it off the ham! [*HAWTREE then places it on the mantelpiece.*] No, no! put
5 it in the fireplace. [*HAWTREE does so.*] You've spoilt my frock. [*Sitting.*]

HAWTREE. Allow me to offer you a new one. [*Crossing.*]

POLLY. No, I won't. You'll be calling to see how it looks when it's on. Haven't you got a handkerchief?

10 HAWTREE. Yes.

POLLY. Then wipe it dry.

[*HAWTREE bends almost on one knee, and wipes dress. Enter SAM, whistling. Throws cap into HAWTREE's hat on drawers.*]

SAM [*sulkily*]. Arternoon—yer didn't hear me knock!—the door was open. I'm afraid I intrude.

POLLY. No, you don't. We're glad to see you if you've
15 got a handkerchief. Help to wipe this dry.

[*SAM pulls out handkerchief from slop, and dropping on one knee snatches skirt of dress from HAWTREE, who looks up surprised.*]

HAWTREE. I'm very sorry. [*Rising.*] I beg your pardon. [*Business; SAM stares HAWTREE out.*]

POLLY. It won't spoil it.

SAM. The stain won't come out. [*Rising.*]

POLLY. It's only water.

20 SAM [*to ESTHER*]. Arternoon, Miss Eccles. [*To GEORGE.*] Arternoon, sir! [*POLLY rises. To POLLY.*] Who's the other swell?

Stage direction. *slop*, "a loose outer garment, generally of linen, worn by workmen; . . . an overall" (Wright, *Dialect Dictionary*).

POLLY. I'll introduce you. Captain Hawtree—Mr. Samuel Gerridge.

HAWTREE. Charmed, I'm sure. [*Staring at SAM through eyeglass. SAM acknowledges HAWTREE'S recognition by a "chuck" of the head over left shoulder; HAWTREE goes up to* 5
GEORGE.] Who's this?

GEORGE. Polly's sweetheart.

HAWTREE. Oh! Now if I can be of no further assistance, I'll go. [*Comes over back down to drawers.*]

POLLY. Going, Corporal?

10

HAWTREE. Yaas! [*Business: taking up hat and stick from bureau he sees SAM's cap. He picks it out carefully, and coming down stage examines it as a curiosity, drops it on the floor, and pushes it away with his stick, at the same time moving backwards, causing him to bump against SAM, who turns round* 15
savagely.] I beg your pardon. [*Crossing up stage.*] George, will you— [*GEORGE takes no notice.*] Will you—?

GEORGE. What?

HAWTREE. Go with me?

GEORGE. Go? No!

20

HAWTREE [*coming down to POLLY*]. Then, Miss Eccles—I mean "my lady." [*Shaking hands and going; as he backs away bumps against SAM, and business repeated, HAWTREE close to door keeping his eye on SAM, who has shown signs* 25
of anger.]

POLLY. Goodby, Corporal!

HAWTREE [*at door*]. Goodby! Good afternoon, Mr.—Mr. — er — Pardon me.

SAM [*with constrained rage*]. Gerridge, sir—Gerridge.

HAWTREE [*as if remembering name*]. Ah! Gerridge. Good- 30
day. [*Exit.*]

SAM [*turning to POLLY in awful rage*]. Who's that fool? Who's that long idiot?

POLLY I told you; Captain Hawtree.

SAM. What's 'e want 'ere?

POLLY. He's a friend of Mr. D'Alroy's.

SAM. Ugh! Isn't one of 'em enough!

POLLY. What do you mean?

5 SAM. For the neighbors to talk about. Who's he after?

POLLY. What do you mean by after? You're forgetting yourself, I think.

SAM. No, I'm not forgetting myself—I'm remembering you. What can a long fool of a swell dressed up to the
10 nines within an inch of his life want with two girls of your class? Look at the difference of your stations! 'E don't come 'ere after any good.

[*During the speech, ESTHER crosses to fire and sits before it in a low chair. GEORGE follows her and sits on her left.*]

POLLY. Samuel!

SAM. I mean what I say. People should stick to their
15 own class. Life's a railway journey, and mankind's a passenger—first class, second class, third class. Any person found riding in a superior class to that for which he has taken his ticket will be removed at the first station stopped at, according to the by-laws of the company.

20 POLLY. You're giving yourself nice airs! What business is it of yours who comes here? Who are you?

SAM. I'm a mechanic.

POLLY. That's evident.

SAM. I ain't ashamed of it. I'm not ashamed of my
25 paper cap.

POLLY. Why should you be? I daresay Captain Hawtree isn't ashamed of his fourteen-and-sixpenny gossamer.

9. *up to the nines*, "to perfection, to the uttermost, first-rate; grandly, splendidly" (Wright, *Dialect Dictionary*).

27. *gossamer*, "a hat (at first a make of peculiar lightness) called a four and nine, so called from the price at which an enterprising Bread Street hatter sold his hats circa 1844, at which date London was hideous with posters displaying a large black hat and '4s and 9d' in white letters" (Farmer and Henley, *Dictionary of Slang and Its Analogues*).

SAM. You think a deal of him 'cos he's a captain. Why did he call you "my lady"?

POLLY. Because he treated me as one. I wish you'd make the same mistake.

SAM. Ugh! [SAM goes angrily to bureau. POLLY bounces up stage, and sits in window seat.] 5

ESTHER [sitting with GEORGE, tête-à-tête, by fire]. But we must listen to reason.

GEORGE. I hate reason!

ESTHER. I wonder what it means? 10

GEORGE. Everything disagreeable. When people talk unpleasantly, they always say, "Listen to reason."

SAM [turning round]. What will the neighbors say?

POLLY. I don't care! [Coming down.]

SAM. What will the neighbors think? 15

POLLY. They can't think. They're like you; they've not been educated up to it.

SAM. It all comes of your being on the stage. [Going to POLLY.]

POLLY. It all comes of your not understanding the stage or anything else—but putty. Now, if you were a gentleman— 20

SAM. Why then, of course, I should make up to a lady.

POLLY. Ugh! [POLLY flings herself into chair by table.]

GEORGE. Reason's an idiot. Two and two are four, and twelve are fifteen, and eight are twenty. That's reason! 25

SAM [turning to POLLY]. Painting your cheeks!

POLLY [rising]. Better paint our cheeks than paint nasty old doors as you do. How can you understand art? You're only a mechanic! You're not a professional! You're in trade. You are not of the same station as we are. When the manager speaks to you, you touch your hat, and say, "Yes, sir," because he's your superior. [Snaps fingers under SAM's nose.] 30

GEORGE. When people love, there's no such thing as money—it don't exist.

ESTHER. Yes, it does.

GEORGE. Then it oughtn't to.

5 SAM. The manager employs me same as he does you. Payment is good anywhere and everywhere. Whatever's commercial is right.

POLLY. Actors are not like mechanics. They wear cloth coats, and not fustian jackets.

10 SAM [*snceringly in POLLY's face*]. I despise play actors.

POLLY. I despise mechanics. [*POLLY slaps his face.*]

GEORGE. I never think of anything else but you.

ESTHER. Really?

SAM [*goes to bureau, misses cap, looks around, sees it on*
15 *floor, picks it up angrily, and comes to POLLY, who is sitting by the table*]. I won't stay here to be insulted. [*Putting on cap.*]

POLLY. Nobody wants you to stay. Go! Go! Go!

SAM. I will go. Goodby, Miss Mary Eccles. [*Goes off*
20 *and returns quickly.*] I shan't come here again! [*At door half-open.*]

POLLY. Don't! Good riddance to bad rubbish.

SAM [*rushing down stage to POLLY*]. You can go to your captain!

25 POLLY. And you to your putty.

[*SAM throws his cap down and kicks it—then goes up stage and picks it up. POLLY turns and rises, leaning against table, facing him, crosses to door, and locks it. SAM, hearing click of lock, turns quickly.*]

ESTHER. And shall you always love me as you do now?

GEORGE. More.

POLLY. Now you shan't go. [*Locking door, taking out*

key, which she pockets, and placing her back against door.] Nyer! Now I'll just show you my power. Nyer!

SAM. Miss Mary Eccles, let me out! [*Advancing to door.*]

POLLY. Mr. Samuel Gerridge, I shan't! [*Sam turns away.*] 5

ESTHER. Now you two. [*Postman's knock.*] The postman!

SAM. Now you must let me out. You must unlock the door.

POLLY. No, I needn't. [*Opens window, looking out.*] Here—postman. [*Takes letter from postman at window.*] Thank 10 you. [*Business: flicks SAM in the face with letter.*] For you, Esther!

ESTHER [*rising*]. For me?

POLLY. Yes. [*Gives it to her, and closes window, and returns to door triumphantly. SAM goes to window.*] 15

ESTHER [*going down*]. From Manchester!

GEORGE. Manchester? [*Coming down back of ESTHER.*]

ESTHER [*reading*]. I've got the engagement—four pounds a week.

GEORGE [*placing his arm around her*]. You shan't go. 20 Esther—stay—be my wife!

ESTHER. But the world—your world?

GEORGE. Hang the world! You're my world. Stay with your husband, Mrs. George D'Alroy.

[*During this POLLY has been dancing up and down in front of the door.*]

SAM. I will go out! [*Turning with sudden determina-* 25 *tion.*]

POLLY. You can't, and you shan't!

SAM. I can—I will! [*Opens window and jumps out.*]

POLLY [*frightened*]. He's hurt himself. Sam—Sam—dear Sam! [*Running to window. SAM appears at window. POLLY* 30 *slaps his face and shuts window down violently.*]

POLLY. Nyer!

[*During this GEORGE has kissed ESTHER.*]

GEORGE. My wife!

[*The handle of the door is heard to rattle; then the door is shaken violently. ESTHER crosses to door; finding it locked, turns to POLLY sitting in window seat, who gives her the key. ESTHER then opens the door. ECCLES reels in, very drunk, and clings to the corner of the bureau for support. GEORGE stands pulling his mustache. ESTHER, a little way up, looking with shame first at her father, then at GEORGE. POLLY sitting in window recess.*]

ACT DROP

For call.—GEORGE, *hat in hand*, bidding ESTHER *goodby*. ECCLES *sitting in chair, nodding before fire*. SAM *again looks in at window*. POLLY *pulls the blind down violently*.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. Draw a diagram of the stage for Act I. Represent the grouping of characters at the close of the act. (Use this suggestion in connection with each play in this text.)

2. What of interest has happened before the play opens? What happens during the first act?

3. What is accomplished for the plot in Act I?

4. Where does the conflict begin?

5. How have we been prepared for the condition of Eccles at the close of the act?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the significance for the play of the quotation from Tennyson?

2. Contrast George and Hawtree as types. Esther and Polly. Discuss Sam as a type.

3. Contrast social conditions as revealed in this act with those of today in your own community.

ACT II

SCENE I. *D'Alroy's lodgings in Mayfair. A set chamber. Folding-doors opening on to drawing-room. Door on the right. Two windows, with muslin curtains. Loo-table. Sofa above piano. Two easy-chairs, on each side of table. Dessert—claret in jug; two wineglasses half full. Box of cigarettes, vase of flowers, embroidered slipper on canvas, and small basket of colored wools, all on table. Footstool by easy-chair. Ornamental gilt workbasket on stand in window. Easy-chair. Piano. Mahogany-stained easel with oil-painting of D'Alroy in full dragoon regimentals. Davenport with vase of flowers on it; a chair on each side; a water-color drawing over it, and on each side of room. Half moonlight through window.*

[ESTHER and GEORGE discovered. ESTHER at window. When curtain has risen she comes down slowly to chair right of table, and GEORGE sitting in easy-chair left of table. GEORGE has his uniform trousers and spurs on.]

ESTHER. George, dear, you seem out of spirits.

GEORGE [smoking cigarette]. Not at all, dear, not at all.

[Rallying.]

ESTHER. Then why don't you talk?

GEORGE. I've nothing to say.

5

ESTHER. That's no reason.

GEORGE. I can't talk about nothing.

ESTHER. Yes, you can; you often do. [Crossing round back of table and caressing him.] You used to do so before we were married.

10

GEORGE. No, I didn't. I talked about you, and my love for you. D'ye call that nothing?

ESTHER [sitting on stool left of GEORGE]. How long have

we been married, dear? Let me see; six months yesterday. [*Dreamily.*] It hardly seems a week; it almost seems a dream.

GEORGE [*putting his arm around her*]. Awfully jolly dream. Don't let us wake up. [*Aside and recovering himself.*] How
5 ever shall I tell her?

ESTHER. And when I married you I was twenty-two, wasn't I?

GEORGE. Yes, dear; but then, you know, you must have been some age or other.

10 ESTHER. No; but to think I lived two and twenty years without knowing you!

GEORGE. What of it, dear?

ESTHER. It seems such a dreadful waste of time.

GEORGE. So it was—awful.

15 ESTHER. Do you remember our first meeting? Then I was in the ballet.

GEORGE. Yes; now you're in the heavies.

ESTHER. Then I was in the front rank—now I am of high rank—the Honorable Mrs. George D'Alroy. You pro-
20 moted me to be your wife.

GEORGE. No, dear, you promoted me to be your husband.

ESTHER. And now I'm one of the aristocracy; ain't I?

GEORGE. Yes, dear; I suppose that we may consider ourselves—

25 ESTHER. Tell me, George; are you quite sure that you are proud of your poor little humble wife?

GEORGE. Proud of you! Proud as the winner of the Derby.

ESTHER. Wouldn't you have loved me better if I'd been
30 a lady?

17. *now you're in the heavies.* D'Alroy is punning on heavy parts, didactic, serious parts, theatrically speaking, and heavy cavalry, to which he belongs.

23. *Derby*, a famous annual horse-race at Epsom, England, established by the Earl of Derby. Derby day "is the great Cockney holiday" (*Century Cyclopedia of Names*).

GEORGE. You *are* a lady—you're my wife.

ESTHER. What will your mamma say when she knows of our marriage? I quite tremble at the thought of meeting her.

GEORGE. So do I. Luckily she's in Rome.

ESTHER. Do you know, George, I should like to be married all over again.

GEORGE. Not to anybody else, I hope?

ESTHER. My darling!

GEORGE. But why over again? Why?

ESTHER. Our courtship was so beautiful. It was like in a novel from the library, only better. You, a fine, rich, high-born gentleman, coming to our humble little house to court poor me. Do you remember the ballet you first saw me in? That was at Covent Garden. *Jeanne la Folle; or The Return of the Soldier.* [Goes up to piano.] Don't you remember the dance? [Plays a quick movement.]

GEORGE. Esther, how came you to learn to play the piano? Did you teach yourself?

ESTHER. Yes. [Turning on music-stool.] So did Polly. We can only just touch the notes to amuse ourselves.

GEORGE. How was it?

ESTHER. I've told you so often. [Rises and sits on stool at GEORGE's feet.]

GEORGE. Tell me again. I'm like the children—I like to hear what I know already.

ESTHER. Well, then, mother died when I was quite young. I can only just remember her. Polly was an infant; so I had to be Polly's mother. Father—who is a very eccentric man [GEORGE sighs deeply—ESTHER notices it and goes on rapidly—all to be simultaneous in action] but a very good one when you know him—did not take much notice of us,

15 Covent Garden, one of the London theatres built in the eighteenth century.

and we got on as we could. We used to let the first floor, and a lodger took it—Herr Griffenhaagen. He was a ballet master at the Opera. He took a fancy to me, and asked me if I should like to learn to dance, and I told him father
5 couldn't afford to pay for my tuition; and he said that [imitation] he did not want payment, but that he would teach me for nothing, for he had taken a fancy to me, because I was like a little lady he had known long years ago in the far-off land he came from. Then he got us an engagement
10 at the theatre. That was how we first were in the ballet.

GEORGE [*slapping his leg*]. That fellow was a great brick; I should like to ask him to dinner. What became of him?

ESTHER. I don't know. He left England. [GEORGE *fidgets and looks at watch*.] You are restless, George. What's
15 the matter?

GEORGE. Nothing.

ESTHER. Are you going out?

GEORGE. Yes. [*Looking at his boots and spurs*.] That's the reason I dined in—

20 ESTHER. To the barracks?

GEORGE. Yes.

ESTHER. On duty?

GEORGE [*hesitatingly*]. On duty. [*Rising*.] And, of course, when a man is a soldier, he must go on duty when he's
25 ordered, and where he's ordered—and—[*aside*—why did I ever enter the service? [*Crosses*.]

ESTHER [*rises, crosses to GEORGE—and twining her arm round him*]. George, if you must go out to your club, go; don't mind leaving me. Somehow or other, George, these
30 last few days everything seems to have changed with me—I don't know why. Sometimes my eyes fill with tears, for no reason, and sometimes I feel so happy, for no reason. I don't mind being left by myself as I used to do. When you are a few minutes behind time I don't run to the window
37 and watch for you, and turn irritable. Not that I love you

less—no, for I love you more; but often when you are away I don't feel that I am by myself. [*Dropping her head on his breast.*] I never feel alone. [*Goes to piano and turns over music.*]

GEORGE [*watching ESTHER*]. What angels women are! At 5 least, this one is. I forget all about the others. [*Carriage-wheels heard off.*] If I'd known I could have been so happy, I'd have sold out when I married. [*Knock at street door.*]

ESTHER [*standing at table*]. That for us, dear?

GEORGE [*at first window*]. Hawtree in a hansom. He's 10 come for—[*aside*—me. I must tell her sooner or later. [*At door.*] Come in, Hawtree.

[*Enter HAWTREE in regimentals.*]

HAWTREE. How do? Hope you're well, Mrs. D'Alroy? [*Coming down.*] George, are you coming to—

GEORGE [*coming down left of HAWTREE*]. No, I've dined 15 —[*gives a significant look*]—we dined early.

[*ESTHER plays scraps of music at piano.*]

HAWTREE [*sotto voce*]. Haven't you told her?

GEORGE. No; I daren't.

HAWTREE. But you must.

GEORGE. You know what an awful coward I am. You 20 do it for me.

HAWTREE. Not for worlds. I've just had my own adieus to make.

GEORGE. Ah, yes—to Florence Carberry. How did she take it?

25

HAWTREE. Oh [*slight pause*], very well.

GEORGE [*earnestly*]. Did she cry?

HAWTREE. No.

GEORGE. Nor exhibit any emotion whatever?

HAWTREE. No, not particularly.

30

GEORGE [*surprisedly*]. Didn't you kiss her?

HAWTREE. No; Lady Clardonax was in the room.

GEORGE [*wonderingly*]. Didn't she squeeze your hand?

HAWTREE. No.

5 GEORGE [*impressively*]. Didn't she say anything?

HAWTREE. No, except that she hoped to see me back again soon, and that India was a bad climate.

GEORGE. Umph! It seems to have been a tragic parting [*serio-comically*]—almost as tragic as parting—your back
10 hair.

HAWTREE. Lady Florence is not the sort of person to make a scene.

GEORGE. To be sure, she's not your wife. I wish Esther would be as cool and comfortable. [*After a pause.*] No, I
15 don't—no, I don't.

[*A rap at door. Enter DIXON.*]

GEORGE [*goes up to DIXON*]. Oh, Dixon, lay out my—

DIXON. I have laid them out, sir; everything is ready.

GEORGE [*going down to HAWTREE—after a pause—irresolutely*]. I must tell her—mustn't I?

20 HAWTREE. Better send for her sister. Let Dixon go for her in a cab.

GEORGE. Just so. I'll send him at once. Dixon! [*Goes up and talks to DIXON.*]

ESTHER [*rising and going to back of chair, left of table*]. Do
25 you want to have a talk with my husband? Shall I go into the dining-room?

HAWTREE. No, Mrs. D'Alroy. [*Going to table and placing cap on it.*]

GEORGE. No, dear. At once, Dixon. Tell the cabman
30 to drive like—[*exit DIXON*—like a—cornet just joined.

30. *cornet*. Apparently *cornet* means the mounted standard bearer of colors in a troop of cavalry (see *New English Dictionary*). Hence, a "cornet just joined" would mean a standard bearer who has just enlisted.

ESTHER [*to HAWTREE*]. Are you going to take him anywhere?

HAWTREE. [*GEORGE comes down and touches HAWTREE quickly on the shoulder before he can speak*]. No. [*Aside*]. Yes—to India. [*Crossing to GEORGE*]. Tell her now. 5

GEORGE. No, no. I'll wait till I put on my uniform. [*Going up*].

[*Door opens and POLLY peeps in*].

POLLY. How d'ye do, good people—quite well? [*POLLY gets back of table—kisses ESTHER*].

GEORGE. Eh? Didn't you meet Dixon? 10

POLLY. Who?

GEORGE. Dixon—my man.

POLLY. No.

GEORGE. Confound it!—he'll have his ride for nothing. How d'ye do, Polly? [*Shakes hands*]. 15

POLLY. How d'ye do, George.

[*ESTHER takes POLLY's things and goes up stage with them*].

POLLY places parasol on table. ESTHER returns left of POLLY.]

POLLY. Bless you, my turtles. [*Blessing them, ballet fashion*]. George, kiss your mother. [*He kisses her*]. That's what I call an honorable brother-in-law's kiss. I'm not in the way, am I? 20

GEORGE [*behind easy-chair right of table*]. Not at all. I'm very glad you've come.

[*ESTHER shows POLLY the new music. POLLY sits at piano and plays comic tune*].

HAWTREE [*back to audience, and elbow on easy-chair, aside to GEORGE*]. Under ordinary circumstances she's not a very eligible visitor. 25

GEORGE. Caste again. [*Going up*]. I'll be back directly. [*Exit GEORGE*].

HAWTREE [*looking at watch and crossing*]. Mrs. D'Alroy, I—

ESTHER [*who is standing over POLLY at piano*]. Going?

POLLY [*rising*]. Do I drive you away, Captain? [*Taking her parasol from table. ESTHER gets to back of chair left of table.*]

5 HAWTREE. No.

POLLY. Yes, I do. I frighten you, I'm so ugly. I know I do. You frighten me.

HAWTREE. How so?

POLLY. You're so handsome. [*Coming down.*] Particu-
10 larly in those clothes, for all the world like an inspector of police.

ESTHER [*half aside*]. Polly!

POLLY. I will! I like to take him down a bit.

HAWTREE [*aside*]. This is rather a wild sort of thing in
15 sisters-in-law.

POLLY. Any news, Captain?

HAWTREE [*in a drawling tone*]. No. Is there any news with you?

POLLY [*imitating him*]. Yaas; we've got a new piece com-
20 ing out at our theatre.

HAWTREE [*interested*]. What's it about?

POLLY [*drawling*]. I don't know. [*To ESTHER.*] Had him there! [*HAWTREE drops his sword from his arm; POLLY turns round quickly, hearing the noise, and pretends to be*
25 *frightened.*] Going to kill anybody today, that you've got your sword on?

HAWTREE. No.

POLLY. I thought not. [*Sings:*]

30 "With a saber on his brow,
 And a helmet by his side,
The soldier sweethearts servant-maids,
 And eats cold meat beside."

[*Laughs and walks about, waving her parasol.*]

[Enter GEORGE in uniform, carrying in his hand his sword, sword-belt, and cap. ESTHER takes them from him, and places them on sofa, then comes half down. GEORGE goes down by HAWTREE.]

POLLY [clapping her hands]. Oh! here's a beautiful brother-in-law! Why didn't you come in on horseback as they do at Astley's?—gallop in and say [imitating soldier on horseback and prancing up and down stage during the piece], Soldiers of France! the eyes of Europe are a-looking at you! The Empire has confidence in you, and France expects that every man this day will do his—little utmost! The foe is before you—more's the pity—and you are before them—worse luck for you! Forward! Go and get killed; and to those who escape, the Emperor will give a little bit of ribbon! Nine- 10
teens, about! Forward! Gallop! Charge! [Galloping to right, imitating bugle, and giving point with parasol. She nearly spears HAWTREE'S nose. HAWTREE claps his hand upon his sword-hilt. She throws herself into chair, laughing, and clapping HAWTREE'S cap (from table) upon her head. All 15
laugh and applaud. Carriage-wheels heard without.]

POLLY. Oh, what a funny little cap; it's got no peak. [A peal of knocks heard at street door.] What's that?

GEORGE [who has hastened to window]. A carriage! Good heavens—my mother! 20

HAWTREE [at window]. The Marchioness!

ESTHER [crossing to GEORGE]. Oh, George!

POLLY [crossing to window]. A Marchioness! A real, live Marchioness! Let me look! I never saw a real live Marchioness in all my life. 25

GEORGE [forcing her from window]. No, no, no! She

3. Astley's. "The circus and hippodrome, well known as 'Astley's,' was situated on the Surrey side of the Thames, not far from Westminster Bridge; it is now known as 'Sanger's Amphitheatre'" (*Century Cyclopaedia of Names*).

10 Nineteens. The "Nineteenth" was a famous cavalry regiment, the "Prince of Wales' Own" Hussars (1858-1882).

doesn't know I'm married. I must break it to her by degrees. What shall I do?

[*By this time HAWTREE is at door right. ESTHER at door left.*]

ESTHER. Let me go into the bedroom until—

HAWTREE. Too late! She's on the stairs.

5 ESTHER. Here, then! [*At center doors, opens them.*]

POLLY. I want to see a real, live March—

[*GEORGE lifts her in his arms and places her within folding-doors with ESTHER—then shutting doors quickly, turns and faces HAWTREE, who, gathering up his sword, faces GEORGE. They then exchange places much in the fashion of soldiers "mounting guard." As GEORGE opens door and admits MARCHIONESS, HAWTREE drops down to left.*]

GEORGE [*with great ceremony*]. My dear mother, I saw you getting out of the carriage.

MARCHIONESS. My dear boy [*kissing his forehead*]. I'm
10 so glad I got to London before you embarked. [*GEORGE nervous. HAWTREE coming down.*] Captain Hawtree, I think. How do you do?

HAWTREE [*coming forward a little*]. Quite well, I thank your ladyship. I trust you are—

15 MARCHIONESS [*sitting in easy-chair*]. Oh, quite, thanks. [*Slight pause.*] Do you still see the Countess and Lady Florence? [*Looking at him through her glasses.*]

HAWTREE. Yes.

MARCHIONESS. Please remember me to them—[*HAWTREE*
20 *takes cap from table, and places sword under his arm.*] Are you going?

HAWTREE. Yaas—Compelled. [*Bows, crossing round back of table. To GEORGE who meets him.*] I'll be at the door for you at seven. We must be at barracks by the quarter.
25 [*GEORGE crosses back of table.*] Poor devil! This comes of a man marrying beneath him.

[*Exit* HAWTREE. GEORGE comes down left of table.]

MARCHIONESS. I'm not sorry that he's gone, for I wanted to talk to you alone. Strange that a woman of such good birth as the Countess should encourage the attention of Captain Hawtree for her daughter Florence. [*During these lines D'ALROY conceals POLLY's hat and umbrella under table.*] 5
 Lady Clardonax was one of the old Carberrys of Hampshire—not the Norfolk Carberrys, but the direct line. And Mr. Hawtree's grandfather was in trade—something in the City—soap, I think. Stool, George! [*Points to stool.* GEORGE brings it to her. *She motions that he is to sit at her feet.* GEORGE 10
does so with a sigh.] He's a very nice person, but parvenu, as one may see by his languor and his swagger. My boy [*kissing his forehead*], I am sure, will never make a mésalliance. He is a D'Alroy, and by his mother's side Plantagenista. The source of our life stream is royal. 15

GEORGE. How is the Marquis?

MARCHIONESS. Paralyzed. I left him at Spa with three physicians. He is always paralyzed at this time of the year; it is in the family. The paralysis is not personal, but hereditary. I came over to see my steward; got to town last night. 20

GEORGE. How did you find me out here?

MARCHIONESS. I sent the footman to the barracks, and he saw your man Dixon in the street, and Dixon gave him this address. It's so long since I've seen you. [*Leans back in chair.*] You're looking very well, and I daresay when 25
 mounted are quite a "beau cavalier." And so, my boy [*playing with his hair*], you are going abroad for the first time on active service.

GEORGE [*aside*]. Every word can be heard in the next room. If they've only gone upstairs! 30

MARCHIONESS. And now, my dear boy, before you go I

14. *Plantagenista*, a descendant of the Plantagenets, the royal English line from 1154 to 1485.

want to give you some advice; and you mustn't despise it because I'm an old woman. We old women know a great deal more than people give us credit for. You are a soldier—so was your father—so was his father—so was mine—so
 5 was our royal founder; we were born to lead! The common people expect it from us. It is our duty. Do you not remember in the *Chronicles of Froissart*? [*With great enjoyment.*] I think I can quote it word for word; I've a wonderful memory for my age. [*With closed eyes.*] It was in the
 10 fifty-ninth chapter—"How Godefroy D'Alroy helde the towne of St. Amande duryng the siege before Tournay." It said, "the towne was not closed but with pales, and captayne there was Sir Amory of Pauy—the Seneschall of Carcassoune—who had said it was not able to hold agaynste an hooste,
 15 when one Godefroy D'Alroy sayd that rather than he woulde depart, he woulde keepe it to the best of his power. Whereat the souldiers cheered and sayd, 'Lead us on, Sir Godefroy.' And then began a fierce assault; and they within were chased, and sought for shelter from street to street. But Godefroy
 20 stood at the gate so valyantly that the souldiers helde the towne until the commyng of the Earl of Haynault with twelve thousande men."

GEORGE [*aside*]. I wish she'd go. If she once gets on to *Froissart*, she'll never know when to stop.

25 MARCHIONESS. When my boy fights—and you will fight—he is sure to distinguish himself. It is his nature to—
 [*toys with his hair*—he cannot forget his birth. And when you meet these Asiatic ruffians, who have dared to revolt, and to outrage humanity, you will strike as your ancestor
 30 Sir Galtier of Chevrault struck at Poitiers. [*Changing tone of voice as if remembering.*] *Froissart* mentions it thus: "Sir

7. *Froissart*, Jean Froissart (1337-1404?), a French chronicler of the Hundred Years War between England and France.

30. *Poitiers*, the Battle of Poitiers (1356), one of the famous victories of the English under the Black Prince.

Galtier, with his four squires, was in the front, in that battell, and there did marvels in arms. And Sir Galtier rode up to the Prince, and sayd to him—‘Sir, take your horse and ryde forth; this journey is yours. God is this daye in your handes. Gette us to the French Kynge’s batayle. I think verily by 5 his valyantesse, he woll not fly. Advance banner in the name of God and of Saynt George!’ And Sir Galtier galloped forward to see his Kynge’s victory, and meet his own death.”

GEORGE [*aside*]. If Esther hears all this! 10

MARCHIONESS. There is another subject about which I should have spoken to you before this; but an absurd prudery forbade me. I may never see you more. I am old—and you 5 —are going into battle—[*kissing his forehead with emotion*]—and this may be our last meeting. [*Noise heard within* 15 *folding-doors.*] What’s that?

GEORGE. Nothing—my man Dixon in there.

MARCHIONESS. We may not meet again on this earth. I do not fear your conduct, my George, with men; but I know the temptations that beset a youth who is well born. 20 But a true soldier, a true gentleman, should not only be without fear, but without reproach. It is easier to fight a furious man than to forego the conquest of a lovesick girl. A thousand Sepoys slain in battle cannot redeem the honor of a man who has betrayed the confidence of a trusting 25 woman. Think, George, what dishonor—what stain upon your manhood—to hurl a girl to shame and degradation! And what excuse for it? That she is plebeian? A man of real honor will spare the woman who has confessed her love for him as he would give quarter to an enemy he had dis- 30 armed. [*Taking his hands.*] Let my boy avoid the snares so artfully spread; and when he asks his mother to welcome the woman he has chosen for his wife, let me take her to my arms and plant a motherly kiss upon the white brow of

a lady. [*Noise of a fall heard within folding-doors. Rising.*] What's that?

GEORGE [*rising*]. Nothing.

MARCHIONESS. I heard a cry.

[*Folding-doors open; discovering ESTHER with POLLY, staggering in, fainting.*]

5 POLLY. George! George!

[*GEORGE goes up and ESTHER falls in his arms. GEORGE places ESTHER on sofa. GEORGE on her right, POLLY on her left.*]

MARCHIONESS [*coming down*]. Who are these women?

POLLY. Women!

MARCHIONESS. George D'Alroy, these persons should have been sent away. How could you dare to risk your
10 mother meeting women of their stamp?

POLLY [*violently*]. What does she mean? How dare she call me a woman? What's she, I'd like to know?

GEORGE. Silence, Polly! You musn't insult my mother.

MARCHIONESS. The insult is from you. I leave you, and
15 I hope that time may induce me to forget this scene of degradation. [*Turning to go.*]

GEORGE. Stay, mother. [*MARCHIONESS turns slightly away.*] Before you go [*GEORGE has raised ESTHER from sofa in his arms*] let me present to you Mrs. George D'Alroy.
20 *My wife!*

MARCHIONESS. Married!

GEORGE. Married.

[*MARCHIONESS sinks into easy-chair; GEORGE replaces ESTHER on sofa, but still retains her hand. Three hesitating taps at door heard. GEORGE crosses to door, opens it, discovers ECCLES, who enters. GEORGE drops down back of MARCHIONESS'S chair.*]

ECCLES. They told us to come up. When your man came Polly was out; so I thought I should do instead. [*Calling at door.*] Come up, Sam.

[*Enter SAM in his Sunday clothes, with short cane and smoking a cheroot. He nods and grins —POLLY points to MARCHIONESS —SAM takes cheroot from his mouth and quickly removes his hat.*]

ECCLES. Sam had just called; so we three—Sam and I, and your man, all came in the 'ansom cab together. Didn't we, Sam? [*ECCLES and SAM go over to the girls, and ECCLES drops down to front of table—smilingly.*]

MARCHIONESS [*with glasses up, to GEORGE*]. Who is this?

GEORGE [*coming left of MARCHIONESS*]. My wife's father.

MARCHIONESS. What is he?

10

GEORGE. A—nothing.

ECCLES. I am one of nature's noblemen. Happy to see you, my lady —[*turning to her*] —now, my daughters have told me who you are—[*GEORGE turns his back in an agony as ECCLES crosses to MARCHIONESS*]*—*we old folks, fathers and mothers of the young couples, ought to make friends. [*Holding out his dirty hand.*]

MARCHIONESS [*shrinking back*]. Go away! [*ECCLES goes back to table again, disgusted.*] What's his name?

GEORGE. Eccles.

20

MARCHIONESS. Eccles! Eccles! There never was an Eccles. He don't exist.

ECCLES. Don't he though? What d'ye call this? [*Goes up again to back of table as SAM drops down. He is just going to take a decanter when SAM stops him.*]

25

MARCHIONESS. No Eccles was ever born!

GEORGE. He takes the liberty of breathing notwithstanding. [*Aside.*] And I wish he wouldn't.

MARCHIONESS. And who is the little man? Is he also Eccles?

30

[SAM looks round. POLLY gets close up to him, and looks with defiant glance at the MARCHIONESS.]

GEORGE. No.

MARCHIONESS. Thank goodness! What then?

GEORGE. His name is Gerridge.

MARCHIONESS. *Gerridge!* It breaks one's teeth. Why is
5 he here?

GEORGE. He is making love to Polly, my wife's sister.

MARCHIONESS. And what is he?

GEORGE. A gasman.

MARCHIONESS. He looks it. [GEORGE goes up to ESTHER.]
10 And what is she—the—the sister?

[ECCLES, who has been casting longing eyes at the decanter on table, edges toward it, and when he thinks no one is noticing, fills wineglass.]

POLLY [asserting herself indignantly]. I'm in the ballet at the Theatre Royal, Lambeth. So was Esther. We're not ashamed of what we are! We have no cause to be.

SAM. That's right, Polly! pitch into them swells!—who
15 are they?

[ECCLES by this time has seized wineglass, and turning his back, is about to drink, when HAWTREE enters. ECCLES hides glass under his coat, and pretends to be looking up at picture.]

HAWTREE [entering]. George! [Stops suddenly, looking round.] So, all's known!

MARCHIONESS [rising]. Captain Hawtree, see me to my carriage; I am broken-hearted. [Takes HAWTREE'S arm and
20 is going up.]

ECCLES [who has tasted the claret, spits it out with a grimace, exclaiming]. Rot!

[POLLY goes to piano—sits on stool—SAM, back to audience, leaning on piano. ECCLES exits through folding-doors.]

GEORGE [to MARCHIONESS]. Don't go in anger. You may not see me again.

[ESTHER rises in nervous excitement, clutching GEORGE's hand. MARCHIONESS stops. ESTHER brings GEORGE down.]

ESTHER [with arm round his neck]. Oh, George! must you go? [They come to front of table.]

GEORGE. Yes.

ESTHER. I can't leave you. I'll go with you!

GEORGE. Impossible! The country is too unsettled.

ESTHER. May I come after you?

GEORGE. Yes.

ESTHER [with her head on his shoulder]. I may.

MARCHIONESS [coming down, HAWTREE at door]. It is his duty to go. His honor calls him. The honor of his family—our honor.

ESTHER. But I love him so! Pray don't be angry with me!

HAWTREE [looking at watch and coming down]. George!

GEORGE. I must go, love.

[HAWTREE goes up to door again.]

MARCHIONESS [advancing]. Let me arm you, George—let your mother, as in the days of old. There is blood—and blood, my son. See, your wife cries when she should be proud of you!

GEORGE. My Esther is all that is good and noble. No lady born to a coronet could be gentler or more true. Esther, my wife, fetch me my sword, and buckle my belt around me.

ESTHER [clinging to him]. No, no; I can't!

GEORGE. Try. [*Whispers to ESTHER.*] To please my mother. [*To MARCHIONESS.*] You shall see. [*ESTHER totters up stage, POLLY assisting her, and brings down his sword. As ESTHER is trying to buckle his belt, he whispers.*] I've left
 5 money for you, my darling. My lawyer will call on you tomorrow. Forgive me! I tried hard to tell you we were ordered for India; but when the time came, my heart failed me, and I—

[*ESTHER, before she can succeed in fastening his sword-belt, reels, and falls fainting in his arms. POLLY hurries to her. SAM standing at piano, looking frightened; HAWTREE with hand upon handle of door; MARCHIONESS looking on, at right of GEORGE.*]

ACT DROP

For call—GEORGE and HAWTREE gone. ESTHER in chair fainting; POLLY and SAM each side of her, POLLY holding her hands, and SAM fanning her with his red handkerchief. The folding-doors thrown open, and ECCLES standing at back of table offering glass of claret.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. Draw a diagram of the stage for Act II.
2. What happens during the second act?
3. What is accomplished for the audience in the conversation between George and Esther at the opening of Act II?
4. What kind of woman is George's mother? Give reasons for your answer and tell how we have been prepared for her before she appears. What is the significance of her quoting from Froissart? What is the significance of her attitude toward the Indian subjects of Great Britain (page 60)?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Suspense in Act II: Show the gradual heightening of interest from the conversation between George and Esther at the opening of the act to the fainting of Esther at the close.

2. A comparison of Esther in Act II with heroines you know in fiction and drama of earlier periods, of her own period, and of today.

3. Your impression of George's mother as revealed in this act.

ACT III

SCENE.—*The room in Stangate (as in Act I). Same furniture as in Act I, with exception of piano, with roll of music tied up on it, in place of bureau. Map of India over mantelpiece. Sword with crape knot, spurs, and cap, craped, hanging over chimney piece. Portrait of D'Alroy (large) on mantelpiece. Berceausette, and child, with coral, in it. Polly's bonnet and shawl hanging on peg. Small tin saucepan in fender, fire alight, and kettle on it. Two candles (tallow) in sticks, one of which is broken about three inches from the top and hangs over. Slate and pencil on table. Jug on table, bandbox and ballet skirt on table.*

[*At rise of curtain POLLY discovered at table, back of stage. Comes down and places skirt in bandbox. She is dressed in black.*]

POLLY [*placing skirt in box, and leaning her chin upon her hand.*] There —there's the dress for poor Esther in case she gets the engagement, which I don't suppose she will. It's too good luck, and good luck never comes to her, poor thing. [*Goes up to back of cradle.*] Baby's asleep still. How good he 5 looks—as good as if he were dead, like his poor father; and

alive too, at the same time, like his dear self. Ah! dear me; it's a strange world. [*Sits in chair right of table, feeling in pocket for money.*] Four and elevenpence. That must do for today and tomorrow. Esther is going to bring in the
 5 rusks for Georgy. [*Takes up slate.*] Three, five—eight, and four—twelve, one shilling—father can only have twopence. [*This all to be said in one breath.*] He must make do with that till Saturday, when I get my salary. If Esther gets the engagement, I shan't have many more salaries to take; I
 10 shall leave the stage and retire into private life. I wonder if I shall like private life, and if private life will like me. It will seem so strange being no longer Miss Mary Eccles—but Mrs. Samuel Gerridge. [*Writes it on slate.*] "Mrs. Samuel Gerridge." [*Laughs bashfully.*] La! to think of
 15 my being Mrs. Anybody! How annoyed Susan Smith will be! [*Writing on slate.*] "Mrs. Samuel Gerridge presents her compliments to Miss Susan Smith, and Mrs. Samuel Gerridge requests the favor of Miss Susan Smith's company to tea, on Tuesday evening next, at Mrs. Samuel Gerridge's
 20 house." [*Pause.*] Poor Susan! [*Beginning again.*] "P.S.—Mrs. Samuel Gerridge—"

[*Knock heard at room door; POLLY starts.*]

SAM [*without*]. Polly, open the door.

POLLY. Sam! come in.

SAM [*without*]. I can't.

25 POLLY. Why not?

SAM. I've got somethin' on my 'ead.

[*POLLY rises and opens door. SAM enters, carrying two rolls of wall-paper, one in each hand, and a small table on his head, which he deposits down stage, then puts roll of paper on piano, as also his cap. SAM has a rule-pocket in corduroys.*]

POLLY. [*shuts door*]. What's that?

SAM [*pointing to table with pride*]. Furniture. How are you, my Polly? [*Kissing her.*] You look handsomer than ever this morning. [*Dances and sings.*] "Tid-dle-di-tum-ti-di-do."

POLLY. What's the matter, Sam? Are you mad? 5

SAM. No, 'appy—much the same thing.

POLLY. Where have you been these two days?

SAM [*all excitement*]. That's just what I'm goin' to tell yer. Polly, my pet, my brightest batswing and most brilliant burner, what do yer think? 10

POLLY. Oh, do go on, Sam, or I'll slap your face.

SAM. Well, then, you've 'eard me speak of old Binks, the plumber, glazier, and gasfitter, who died six months ago?

POLLY. Yes.

SAM [*sternly and deliberately*]. I've bought 'is business. 15

POLLY. No!

SAM [*excitedly*]. Yes, of 'is widow, old Mrs. Binks—so much down, and so much more at the end of the year. [*Dances and sings.*] Ri-ti-toodle

Roodle-oodle

Ri-ti-tooral-lay. 20

POLLY. La, Sam.

SAM [*pacing stage up and down*]. Yes; I've bought the goodwill, fixtures, fittin's, stock, rolls of gas-pipe, and sheets of lead. [*Jumps on table, quickly facing POLLY.*] Yes, Polly, 25
i'm a tradesman with a shop—a master tradesman. [*Coming to POLLY seriously.*] All I want to complete the premises is a missus. [*Tries to kiss her. She pushes him away.*]

POLLY. Sam, don't be foolish.

SAM [*arm round her waist*]. Come and be Mrs. Sam Gerridge, 30
Polly, my patent-safety-day-and-night-light. You'll furnish 'me completely.

9. batwing, "a form of gas-burner in which gas issues at a slit so proportioned as to give to the flame the shape of a bat's wing" (*Pemberton*).

[POLLY goes up, SAM watching her admiringly; he then sees slate, snatches it up, and looks at it. She snatches it from him with a shriek, and rubs out the writing, looking daggers at him, SAM laughing.]

SAM. Only to think now. [Putting arm round her waist.

POLLY pouting.]

POLLY. Don't be a goose.

SAM [going toward table]. I spent the whole of yesterday
5 lookin' up furniture. Now I bought that a bargain, and
I brought it 'ere to show you for your approval. I've bought
lots of other things, and I'll bring 'em all 'ere to show you
for your approval.

POLLY. I couldn't think what had become of you. [Seated
10 right of table.]

SAM. Couldn't yer? Oh, I say, I want yer to choose the
new paper for the little back-parlor just behind the shop,
you know. Now what d'yer think of this? [Fetching a
pattern from piano and unrolling it.]

15 POLLY. No, I don't like that. [SAM fetches the other, a
flaming pattern.] Ah! that's neat.

SAM. Yes, that's neat and quiet. I'll new-paper it, and
new-furnish it, and it shall all be bran-new. [Puts paper on
top of piano.]

20 POLLY. But won't it cost a lot of money?

SAM [bravely]. I can work for it. With customers in the
shop, and you in the back-parlor, I can work like fifty men.
[Sits on table, beckons POLLY to him; she comes left of table,
SAM puts his arm round POLLY, sentimentally.] Only fancy,
25 at night, when the shop's closed, and the shutters are up,
counting out the till together! [Changing his manner.]
Besides, that isn't all I've been doin'. I've been writin',
and what I've written, I've got printed.

POLLY. No!

30 SAM. True.

POLLY. You've been writing—about me? [*Delighted.*]

SAM. No—about the shop. [*POLLY disgusted.*] Here it is. [*Takes roll of circulars from pocket of his canvas slop.*] Yer mustn't laugh -yer know—it's my first attempt. I wrote it the night before last; and when I thought of you the words 5 seemed to flow like -red-hot solder. [*Reads.*] Hem! "Samuel Gerridge takes this opportunity of informin' the nobility, gentry, and inhabitants of the Borough-road—"

POLLY. The Borough-road?

SAM. Well, there ain't many of the nobility and gentry 10 as lives in the Borough-road, but it pleases the inhabitants to make 'em believe yer think so [*resuming*]"—"of informin' the nobility, gentry and inhabitants of the Borough-road, and its vicinity"—and "its vicinity." [*Looking at her.*] Now I think that's rather good, eh? 15

POLLY. Yes. [*Doubtfully.*] I've heard worse.

SAM. I first thought of saying neighbor'ood; but then vicinity sounds so much more genteel [*resuming*]"—"and its vicinity, that 'e has entered upon the business of the late Mr. Binks, 'is relict, the present Mrs. B., 'avin' disposed to 20 'im of the same"—now listen, Polly, because it gets interestin'—"S. G.—"

POLLY. S. G. Who's he?

SAM [*looking at POLLY with surprise*]. Why, me. S. G.—Samuel Gerridge—me, us. We're S. G. Now don't interrupt 25 me, or you'll cool my metal, and then I can't work. "S. G. 'opes that, by a constant attention to business, and"—mark this—"by supplyin' the best articles at the most reasonable prices, to merit a continuance of those favors which it will ever be 'is constant study to deserve." There! [*Turning 30 on table triumphantly.*] Stop a bit,—there's a little bit more yet. "Bell-'angin', gas-fittin', plumbin', and glazin', as usual." There! and it's all my own! [*Puts circular on mantelpiece, and crossing, contemplates it.*]

POLLY. Beautiful, Sam. It looks very attractive from here, don't it?

SAM. [*Postman's knock.*] There's the postman. I'll go. I shall send some of these out by post. [*Goes off and returns with letter.*]

POLLY [*taking it*]. Oh, for Esther. I know who it's from. [*Places letter on mantelpiece. At chair left of table. Sam sits corner of table, reading circular. Seriously.*] Sam, who do you think was here last night?

10 SAM. Who?

POLLY. Captain Hawtree.

SAM [*deprecatingly*]. Oh, 'im!—Come back from India, I suppose.

POLLY. Yes—luckily Esther was out.

15 SAM. I never liked that long swell. He was a 'uppish, conceited—

POLLY [*sitting at end of table*]. Oh, he's better than he used to be—he's a major now. He's only been in England a fortnight.

20 SAM. Did he tell yer **anything** about De Alroy?

POLLY [*leaning against table end*]. Yes; he said he was riding out not far from the **cantonment**, and was surrounded by a troop of Sepoy cavalry, **which** took him prisoner, and galloped off with him.

25 SAM. But about 'is death?

POLLY. Oh! [*hiding her face*] **that**, he said, was believed to be too terrible to mention.

SAM [*crossing to POLLY at table*]. Did 'e tell yer **anything** else?

30 POLLY. No; he asked a lot of questions, and I told him everything. How poor Esther had taken her widowhood, and what a dear good baby the baby was and what a comfort to us all, and how Esther had come back to live with us again.

35 SAM [*sharply*]. And the reason for it?

POLLY [*looking down*]. Yes.

SAM. How your father got all the money that 'e'd left for Esther?

POLLY [*sharply*]. Don't say any more about that, Sam.

SAM. Oh! I only think Captain 'Awtree ought to know 5 where the money *did* go to, and you shouldn't try and screen your father, and let 'im suppose that you and Esther spent it all.

POLLY. I told him—I told him—I told him. [*Angrily.*]

SAM. Did you tell 'im that your father was always at 10 'armonic meetin's at taverns, and 'ad 'arf cracked 'isself with drink, and was always singin' the songs and makin' the speeches 'e 'card there, and was always goin' on about 'is wrongs as one of the workin' classes? 'E's a pretty one for one of the workin' classes, 'e is! 'Asn't done a stroke of 15 work these twenty year. Now, I *am* one of the workin' classes, but I *don't* 'owl about it. I work; I don't spout.

POLLY. Hold your tongue, Sam. I won't have you say any more against poor father. He has his faults, but he's a very clever man. [*Sighing.*] 20

SAM. Ah! What else did Captain Hawtree say?

POLLY. He advised us to apply to Mr. D'Alroy's mother.

SAM. What! the Marquissy? And what did you say to that?

POLLY. I said that Esther wouldn't hear of it. And so 25 the Major said that he'd write to Esther, and I suppose this is the letter.

SAM. Now, Polly, come along and choose the paper for the little back-parlor. [*Going to table and taking it up to wall behind door.*] 30

POLLY [*rising*]. Can't. Who's to mind baby?

SAM. The *baby*? Oh, I forgot all about 'im. [*Goes to cradle.*] I see yer! [*Goes to window casually.*] There's your father comin' down the street. Won't 'e mind 'im?

POLLY [*going up*]. I daresay he will. If I promise him 35

an extra sixpence on Saturday. [SAM opens window.] Hi! Father! [POLLY goes to cradle.]

SAM [aside]. 'E looks down in the mouth, 'e does. I suppose 'e's 'ad no drink this morning. [Goes to POLLY.]

[Enter ECCLES in shabby black. Pauses on entering, looks at SAM, turns away in disgust, takes off hat, places it on piano, and shambles across stage. Taking chair, places it, and sits before fire.]

5 POLLY [goes to ECCLES]. Come in to stop a bit, father?

ECCLES. No; not for long. [SAM comes down.] Good morning, Samuel. Going back to work? That's right, my boy—stick to it. [Pokes fire.] Stick to it—nothing like it.

SAM [aside]. Now, isn't that too bad? No, Mr. Eccles.
10 I've knocked off for the day.

ECCLES [waving poker]. That's bad—that's very bad! Nothing like work—for the young. I don't work so much as I used to, myself, but I like to [POLLY sitting on corner of table up left] see the young 'uns at it. It does me good, and
15 it does them good, too. What does the poet say? [Rising, impressively, and leaning on table.]

“A carpenter said though that was well spoke,
It was better by far to defend it with hoak.
A currier, wiser than both put together,
20 Said say what you will, there is nothing like *labor*.
For a' that, and a' that,
Your ribbon, gown, and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The working man's the gold for a' that.”

[Sits again, triumphantly wagging his head.]

25 SAM [aside]. This is one of the public-house loafers, that wants all the wages and none of the work, an idle old—
[Goes in disgust to piano, puts on cap, and takes roll's of paper under his arm.]

POLLY [*to ECCLES*]. Esther will be in by-and-by. [*Persuasively.*] Do, father.

ECCLES. No, no, I tell you I won't!

POLLY [*whispering, arm round his neck*]. And I'll give you sixpence extra on Saturday.

5

[*ECCLES's face relaxes into a broad grin. POLLY gets hat and cloak.*]

ECCLES. Ah! you sly little puss, you know how to get over your poor old father.

SAM [*aside*]. Yes, with sixpence.

POLLY [*putting on bonnet and cloak at door*]. Give the cradle a rock if baby cries.

10

SAM [*crossing to ECCLES*]. If you should 'appen to want employment or amusement, Mr. Eccles, just cast your eye over this. [*Puts circular on table, then joins POLLY at door.*] Stop a bit, I've forgot to give the baby one.

[*Throws circular into cradle. Exeunt, POLLY first. ECCLES takes out pipe from pocket, looks into it, then blows through it making a squeaking noise, and finishes by tenderly placing it on table. He then hunts all his pockets for tobacco, finally finding a little paper packet containing a screw of tobacco in his waistcoat pocket, which he also places on table after turning up the corner of the tablecloth for the purpose of emptying the contents of his pocket of the few remnants of past screws of tobacco on to the bare table and mixing a little out of the packet with it and filling pipe. He then brushes all that remains on the table into the paper packet, pinches it up, and carefully replaces it in waistcoat pocket. Having put the pipe into his mouth, he looks about for a light, across his shoulder and under table, though never rising from the chair; seeing nothing, his face assumes an expression of comic*

Stage direction. *screw*, "a small paper cone twisted at the end for holding tobacco, snuff, etc.; also, such a package: as, a *screw of tobacco*" (*Standard Dictionary*).

anguish. Turning to table he angrily replaces tablecloth and then notices SAM'S circular. His face relaxes into a smile, and picking it up he tears the circular in half, makes a spill of it, and lighting it at fire, stands, with his back to fireplace, and smokes vigorously.]

ECCLES. Poor Esther! Nice market she's brought her pigs to—ugh! Mind the baby indeed! What good is he to me? That fool of a girl to throw away all her chances!—a *honorable-hess*—and her father not to have on him the price
 5 of a pint of early beer or a quartern of cool, refreshing gin! Stopping in here to rock a young honorable! Cuss him! [*Business, puffs smoke in baby's face, rocking cradle.*] Are we slaves, we workingmen? [*Sings savagely.*] “Britons never, never, never shall be—” [*Nodding his head sagaciously, sits*
 10 *by table.*] I won't stand this, I've writ to the old cat—I mean to the Marquissy—to tell her that her daughter-in-law and her grandson is almost starving. That fool Esther is too proud to write to her for money. I hate pride—it's *beastly!* [*Rising.*] There's no beastly pride about me. [*Goes*
 15 *up, smacking his lips.*] I'm as dry as a lime-kiln. [*Takes up jug.*] Milk!—[*with disgust*] for this young aristocratic pauper. Everybody in the house is sacrificed for him! [*At foot of cradle, with arms on chair back.*] And to think that a *working-*
 20 *man*, and a member of the Committee of Banded Brothers for the Regeneration of Human Kind, by means of equal diffusion of intelligence and equal division of property, should be thusty, while this cub—[*Draws aside curtain, and looks at child. After a pause—*] That there coral he's got round his neck is *gold, real gold!* [*With hand on knob at end*
 25 *of cradle.*] Oh, Society! Oh, Governments! Oh, Class Legislation!—*is this right?* Shall this mindless wretch enjoy himself, while sleeping, with a jeweled gaud, and his poor

Stage direction. *spill*, “a slip of wood or rolled strip of paper used for lighting lamps, etc.” (*Standard Dictionary*).

old grandfather want the price of half a pint? No! it shall not be! Rather than see it, I will myself resent this outrage on the rights of man! and in this holy crusade of class against class, of the weak and lowly against the *powerful and strong*—[*pointing to child*—I will strike one blow for freedom! [*Goes 5 to back of cradle.*] He's asleep. It will fetch ten bob round the corner; and if the Marquissy gives us anything it can be got out with some o' that. [*Steals coral.*] Lie still, my darling!—it's grandfather a-watchin' over you—

“Who ran to catch me when I fell,
And kicked the place to make it well?
My grandfather!”

10

[*Rocking cradle with one hand; leaves it quickly, and as he takes hat off piano, ESTHER enters. She is dressed as a widow, her face pale, and her manner quick and imperious. She carries a parcel and paper bag of rusks in her hand; she puts parcel on table, goes to cradle, kneels down, and kisses child.*]

ECCLES. My lovey had a nice walk? You should wrap yourself up well—you are so liable to catch cold.

ESTHER. My Georgy?—Where's his coral? [ECCLES, 15
going to door, fumbles with lock nervously, and is going out as ESTHER speaks.] Gone!—Father! [*Rising—ECCLES stops.*]
The child's coral—where is it?

ECCLES [*confused*]. Where's what, ducky?

ESTHER. The coral! You've got it—I know it! Give it 20
me! [*Quickly and imperiously.*] Give it me! [ECCLES *takes coral from his pocket and gives it back.*] If you dare to touch
my child—[*Goes to cradle.*]

ECCLES. Esther! [*Going quickly to piano and banging hat on it.*] Am I not your father?—[ESTHER *gets round to 25 front of table.*]

ESTHER. And I am his mother!

ECCLES [*coming to her*]. Do you bandy words with me, you pauper, you pauper!!! to whom I have given shelter—shelter to you and your brat! I've a good mind—[*Raising*
5 *his clenched fist.*]

ESTHER [*confronting him*]. If you dare! I am no longer your little drudge—your frightened servant. When mother died—[*ECCLES changes countenance and cowers beneath her glance*—and I was so high, I tended you, and worked for
10 you—and you beat me. That time is past. I am a woman—I am a wife—a widow—a *mother!* Do you think I will let you outrage *him*? Touch me if you dare! [*Advancing a step.*]

ECCLES [*bursting into tears and coming down*]. And this is my
15 own child, which I nussed when a babby, and sang “Cootsi-cum Coo” to afore she could speak. [*Gets hat from piano, and returns a step or two.*] Hon. Mrs. De Alroy [*ESTHER drops down behind chair by table*], I forgive you for all that you have said. I forgive you for all that you have done. In
20 everything that I have done I have acted with the best intentions. May the babe in that cradle never treat you as you have this day *tret* a gray 'aired father. May he never cease to love and honor you, as you have ceased to love and honor me, after all that I have done for you, and the position
25 to which I have raised you by my own *industry*. [*Goes to door.*] May he never behave to you like the bad daughters of King Lear; and may you never live to feel how much more sharper than a serpent's [*slight pause as if remembering quotation*] scale it is to have a thankless child! [*Exit.*]

30 ESTHER [*kneeling back of cradle*]. My darling! [*Arranging bed and placing coral to baby's lips, then to her own.*] Mamma's

27. and may you never, etc. See *Lear*, I, iv, 278-280:

“ . . . that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child.”

come back to her own. Did she stay away from him so long?
[*Rises, and looks at saber, etc.*] My George! to think that
you can never look upon his face or hear his voice. My
brave, gallant, handsome husband! My lion and my love!
[*Comes down, pacing stage.*] Oh! to be a soldier, and to fight
the wretches who destroyed him—who took my darling from
me! [Action of cutting with saber.] To gallop miles upon
their upturned faces. [Crossing with action, breaks down
sobbing at mantelpiece; sees letter.] What's this? Captain
Hawtree's hand. [Sitting in chair, reads, at left hand of table.]
"My dear Mrs. D'Alroy: I returned to England less than a
fortnight ago. I have some papers and effects of my poor
friend's, which I am anxious to deliver to you, and I beg of
you to name a day when I can call with them and see you;
at the same time let me express my deepest sympathy with
your affliction. Your husband's loss was mourned by every
man in the regiment. [Esther lays the letter on her heart,
and then resumes reading.] I have heard with great pain of the
pecuniary embarrassments into which accident and impru-
dence of others have placed you. I trust you will not consider
me, one of poor George's oldest comrades and friends, either
intrusive or impertinent in sending the inclosed [she takes
out a check], and in hoping that, should any further difficulties
arise, you will inform me of them, and remember that I am,
dear Mrs. D'Alroy, now, and always, your faithful and
sincere friend, Arthur Hawtree." [ESTHER goes to cradle and
bends over it.] Oh, his boy, if you could read it! [Sobs, with
head on head of cradle.]

[Enter POLLY.]

POLLY. Father gone!

ESTHER. Polly, you look quite flurried. [POLLY laughs
and whispers to ESTHER.]

ESTHER [near head of table, taking Polly in her arms and

kissing her]. So soon? Well, my darling, I hope you may be happy.

POLLY. Yes. Sam's going to speak to father about it this afternoon. [*Crosses round table, putting rusks in sauce-pan.*] Did you see the agent, dear?

ESTHER [*sits by table*]. Yes; the manager didn't come -- he broke his appointment again.

POLLY [*sits opposite at table*]. Nasty, rude fellow!

ESTHER. The agent said it didn't matter; he thought I should get the engagement. He'll only give me thirty shillings a week, though.

POLLY. But you said that two pounds was the regular salary.

ESTHER. Yes, but they know I'm poor, and want the engagement, and so take advantage of me.

POLLY. Never mind, Esther. I put the dress in that bandbox. It looks almost as good as new.

ESTHER. I've had a letter from Captain Hawtree.

POLLY. I know, dear; he came here last night.

ESTHER. A dear, good letter -- speaking of George, and inclosing a check for thirty pounds.

POLLY. Oh, how kind! Don't you tell father. [*Noise of carriage-wheels without.*]

ESTHER. I shan't.

[*ECCLES enters, breathless. ESTHER and POLLY rise.*]

25 ECCLES. It's the Marquissy in her coach. [*ESTHER puts on the lid of bandbox.*] Now, girls, do be civil to her, and she may do something for us. [*Places hat on piano.*] I see the coach as I was coming out of the "Rainbow." [*Hastily pulls an old comb out of his pocket, and puts his hair*
30 *in order.*]

ESTHER. The Marquise!

[*ESTHER comes down to end of table, Polly holding her hand.*]

ECCLES [*at door*]. This way, my lady—up them steps. They're rather awkward for the likes o' you; but them as is poor and lowly must do as best they can with steps and circumstances.

[*Enter MARQUISE. She surveys the place with aggressive astonishment.*]

MARQUISE [*going down, half aside*]. What a hole! And ⁵ to think that my grandson should breathe such an atmosphere, and be contaminated by such associations! [*To ECCLES, who is a little up.*] Which is the young woman who married my son?

ESTHER. I am Mrs. George D'Alroy, widow of George ¹⁰ D'Alroy. Who are you?

MARQUISE. I am his mother, the Marquise de St. Maur.

ESTHER [*with the grand air*]. Be seated, I beg.

[*ECCLES takes chair from right center, which ESTHER immediately seizes as SAM enters with an easy-chair on his head, which he puts down, not seeing MARQUISE, who instantly sits down in it, concealing it completely.*]

SAM [*astonished*]. It's the Marquissy! [*Looking at her.*] My eyes! These aristocrats are fine women—plenty of 'em— ¹⁵ [*describing circle*] quality and quantity!

POLLY. Go away, Sam; you'd better come back.

[*ECCLES nudges him and bustles him toward door. Exit SAM.*]

ECCLES [*shuts door on him.*]

ECCLES [*coming down right of MARQUISE, rubbing his hands.*] If we'd a know'd your ladyship 'ad beer a-coming we'd a' 'ad the place cleaned up a bit. [*With hands on chair ²⁰ back, in lower right corner of stage. He gets round to right, behind MARQUISE, who turns the chair slightly from him.*]

POLLY. Hold your tongue, father! [*ECCLES crushed.*]

MARQUISE [*to ESTHER*]. You remember me, do you not?

ESTHER. Perfectly, though I only saw you once. [*Seating herself en grande dame.*] May I ask what has procured me the honor of this visit?

MARQUISE. I was informed that you were in want, and
5 I came to offer you assistance.

ESTHER. I thank you for your offer, and the delicate consideration for my feelings with which it is made. I need no assistance. [*ECCLES groans and leans on piano.*]

MARQUISE. A letter that I received last night informed
10 me that you did.

ESTHER. May I ask if that letter came from Captain Hawtree?

MARQUISE. No—from this person—your father, I think.

ESTHER [*to ECCLES*]. How dare you interfere in my affairs?

15 ECCLES. My lovey, I did it with the best intentions.

MARQUISE. Then you will not accept assistance from me?

ESTHER. No.

POLLY [*aside to ESTHER, holding her hand*]. Bless you, my darling. [*POLLY standing beside her.*]

20 MARQUISE. But you have a child—a son—my grandson. [*With emotion.*]

ESTHER. Master D'Alroy wants for nothing.

POLLY [*aside*]. And never shall.

[*ECCLES groans and turns on to piano.*]

MARQUISE. I came here to propose that my grandson
25 should go back with me.

[*POLLY rushes up to cradle.*]

ESTHER [*rising defiantly*]. What! part with my boy! I'd sooner die!

MARQUISE. You can see him when you wish. As for money, I—

30 ESTHER. Not for ten thousand million worlds—not for ten thousand million marchionesses!

ECCLES. Better do what the good lady asks you, my dear; she's advising you for your own good, and for the child's likewise.

MARQUISE. Surely you cannot intend to bring up my son's son in a place like this? 5

ESTHER. I do. [*Goes up to cradle.*]

ECCLES. It is a poor place, and we are poor people, sure enough. We ought not to fly in the faces of our pastors and masters—our pastresses and mistresses.

POLLY [*aside*]. Oh, hold your tongue, do! [*Up at cradle.*] 10

ESTHER [*before cradle*]. Master George D'Alroy will remain with his mother. The offer to take him from her is an insult to his dead father and to him.

ECCLES [*aside*]. He don't seem to feel it, stuck-up little beast. 15

MARQUISE. But you have no money—how can you rear him?—how can you educate him?—how can you live?

ESTHER [*tearing dress from bandbox*]. Turn Columbine—go on the stage again and dance.

MARQUISE [*rising*]. You are insolent—you forget that I 20 am a lady.

ESTHER. You forget that I am a mother. Do you dare to offer to buy my child—*his* breathing image, *his* living memory—with money? [*Crosses to door and throws it open.*] There is the door—go! [*Picture.*] 25

ECCLES [*to MARQUISE, who has risen, aside*]. Very sorry, my lady, as you should be tret in this way, which was not my wishes.

MARQUISE. Silence! [*ECCLES retreats, putting back chair. MARQUISE goes up to door.*] Mrs. D'Alroy, if anything could 30 have increased my sorrow for the wretched marriage my poor son was *decoyed* into, it would be your conduct this day to his mother. [*Exit.*]

ESTHER [*falling into POLLY's arms*]. Oh, Polly! Polly!

ECCLES [*looking after her*]. To go away and not to leave a sov behind her. [*Running up to open door.*] Cat! Cat! Stingy old cat! [*Almost runs to fire, and pokes it violently;*
5 *carriage-wheels heard without.*]

ESTHER. I'll go to my room and lie down. Let me have the baby, or that old woman may come back and steal him.

[*Exit ESTHER, and POLLY follows with baby.*]

ECCLES Well, women is the obstinatest devils as never wore horseshoes. Children? Beasts! Beasts!

[*Enter SAM and POLLY.*]

10 SAM. Come along, Polly, and let's get it over at once. [*SAM places cap on piano, and goes to table. POLLY takes bandbox from table, and places it up stage.*] Now, Mr. Eccles [*ECCLES turns suddenly, facing SAM*], since yo've been talkin' on family matters, I'd like to 'ave a word with yer, so take
15 this opportunity to—

ECCLES [*waving his hand grandly*]. Take what you like, and then order more [*rising and leaning over table*], Samuel Gerridge. That hand is a hand that has never turned its back on a friend, or a bottle to give him. [*Sings, front of*
20 *table.*]

I'll stand by my friend,

I'll stand by my friend,

I'll stand by my friend,

If he'll stand to me—me, gentlemen!

25 SAM. Well, Mr. Eccles, sir, it's this—

POLLY [*aside, coming down to SAM*]. Don't tell him too sudden, Sam—it might shock his feelings.

SAM. It's this: yer know that for the last four years I've been keepin' company with Mary—Polly. [*Turning to her*
30 *and smiling. ECCLES drops into chair as if shot.*]

ECCLES. Go it! go it! strike home, young man! Strike on this gray head! [*Sings.*] "Britons, strike home!" Here [*tapping his chest*], to my heart! Don't spare me! Have a go at my gray hairs. Pull 'em—pull 'em out! A long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull all together! [*Cries, and drops his face on arm on table.*]

POLLY. Oh, father! I wouldn't hurt your feelings for the world. [*Patting his head.*]

SAM. No, Mr. Eccles, I don't want to 'urt your feelin's, but I'm a-goin' to enter upon a business. Here's a circular. [*Offering me.*]

ECCLES [*indignantly*]. Circ'lars. What are circ'lars—compared to a father's feelings?

SAM. And I want Polly to name the day, sir, and so I ask you—

ECCLES. This is 'ard, this is 'ard. One of my daughters marries a soger. The other goes a-gasfitting.

SAM [*annoyed*]. The business which will enable me to maintain a wife is that of the late Mr. Binks, plumber, glazier, etc.

ECCLES [*rising, sings. Air, "Lost Rosabelle"*].

They have given thee to a plumber,

They have broken every vow,

They have given thee to a plumber,

And my heart, my heart is breaking now."

[*Drops into chair again.*]

Now, gentlemen!

[SAM thrusts circulars into his pocket, and turns away angrily.]

POLLY. You know, father, you can come and see me. [*Leans over him.*]

SAM [*sotto voce*]. No, no. [*Motions to POLLY.*]

ECCLES [*looking up*]. So I can, and that's a comfort. [*Shaking her hand.*] And you can come and see me, and

that's a comfort. I'll come and see you often—very often—every day [SAM *turns up stage in horror*], and crack a fatherly bottle [*rising*], and shed a friendly tear. [*Wipes eyes with dirty pocket-handkerchief, which he pulls from breast pocket.*]

5 POLLY. Do, father, do. [*Goes up and gets tea-tray.*]

SAM [*with a gulp*]. Yes, Mr. Eccles, do. [*Goes to POLLY and gesticulates behind tray.*]

ECCLES. I will. [*Goes to center of stage.*] And this it is to be a father. I would part with any of my children for
10 their own good, readily—if I was paid for it. [*Goes to right corner; sings.*] “For I know that the angels are whispering to me”—me, gentlemen! [*POLLY gets tea-things.*]

SAM. I'll try and make Polly a good husband, and anything that I can do to prove it [*lowering his voice*], in the way
15 of spirituous liquors and tobacco [*slipping coin into his hand, unseen by POLLY*], shall be done.

ECCLES [*lightening up and placing his left hand on SAM's head*].

20 “Be kind to thy father,
Wherever you be,
For he is a blessing
And credit to thee”—thee, gentlemen.

[*Gets to center of stage.*] Well, my children—bless you, take the blessings of a gray-'aired father. [*POLLY looking from*
25 *one to the other.*] Samuel Gerridge, she shall be thine. [*Mock heroically, looking at money.*] You shall be his wife [*looking at POLLY*] and you [*looking at SAM*] shall be her husband—for a husband I know no fitter—no fitter “gas-fitter” man. [*Runs to piano and takes hat; goes to door, looks comically*
30 *pathetic at SAM and POLLY, puts on hat and comes toward center of stage.*] I've a friend waiting for me round the corner, which I want to have a word with; and may you never know how much more sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a marriageable daughter. [*Sings.*]

"When I heard she was married,
I breathed not a tone,
The heyes of all round me
Was fixed on my h'own.
I flew to my chamber
To hide my despair,
I tore the bright circlet
Of gems from my hair.
When I heard she was married,
When I heard she was married—"

5

10

[*Breaks down. Exit.*]

POLLY [*drying her eyes*]. There, Sam. I always told you that though father had his faults, his heart was in the right place.

SAM. Poor Polly. [*Crosses to fireplace. Knock at door.*]

POLLY [*top of table*]. Come in.

15

[*Enter HAWTREE.*]

POLLY. Major Hawtree.

[*SAM turns away as they shake hands.*]

HAWTREE. I met the Marquise's carriage on the bridge. Has she been here?

[*SAM at fire, with back to it.*]

POLLY. Yes.

HAWTREE. What happened?

20

POLLY. Oh, she wanted to take away the child. [*At head of table.*]

SAM. In the coach. [*POLLY sets tea-things.*]

HAWTREE. And what did Mrs. D'Alroy say to that?

SAM. Mrs. D'Alroy said that she'd see 'er blowed first! [*POLLY pushes SAM*—or words to that effect.

25

Stage direction. *Breaks down. Exit.* This exit was afterwards abandoned, with the author's permission, being somewhat of an anticlimax. The exit is usually made at the words "marriageable daughter," Eccles breaking down in a comically hysterical manner and going out quickly.

HAWTREE. I'm sorry to hear this; I had hoped—however, that's over.

POLLY [*sitting at table*]. Yes, it's over; and I hope we shall hear no more about it. Want to take away the child, indeed
5 —like her impudence! What next! [*Getting ready tea-things.*] Esther's gone to lie down. I shan't wake her up for tea, though she's had nothing to eat all day.

SAM [*head of table*]. Shall I fetch some shrimps?

POLLY. No. What made you think of shrimps?

10 SAM. They're a relish, and consolin'—at least I always found 'em so.

[*Check lights, gradually.*]

POLLY. I won't ask you to take tea with us, Major—you're too grand.

[SAM motions approbation to POLLY, not wanting HAWTREE to remain.]

HAWTREE [*placing hat on piano*]. Not at all. I shall be
15 most happy. [*Aside.*] 'Pon my word, these are very good sort of people. I'd no idea—

SAM [*points to HAWTREE*]. He's a-goin' to stop to tea—well, I ain't. [*Goes up to window and sits.* HAWTREE crosses and sits opposite POLLY at table.]

20 POLLY. Sam! Sam! [*Pause—SAM says Eh?*] Pull down the blind and light the gas.

SAM. No, don't light up; I like this sort of dusk. It's unbusiness-like, but pleasant.

[SAM cuts enormous slice of bread and hands it on point of knife to HAWTREE. Cuts small lump of butter and hands it on point of knife to HAWTREE, who looks at it through eyeglass, then takes it. SAM then helps himself. POLLY meantime has poured out tea in two cups, and one saucer for SAM, sugars them, and then hands cup and saucer to HAWTREE, who has

both hands full. He takes it awkwardly and places it on table. POLLY, having only one spoon, tastes SAM's tea, then stirs HAWTREE's, attracting his attention by doing so. He looks into his teacup. POLLY stirs her own tea, and drops spoon into HAWTREE's cup, causing it to spurt in his eye. He drops eyeglass and wipes his eyes.]

POLLY [*making tea*]. Sugar, Sam! [SAM takes tea and sits facing fire.] Oh, there isn't any milk—it'll be here directly, it's just his time.

VOICE [*outside; rattle of milk-pails*]. Mia-oow!

POLLY. There he is. [*Knock at door.*] Oh, I know; I owe 5 him fourpence. [*Feeling in her pocket.*] Sam, have you got fourpence? [*Knock again, louder.*]

SAM. No [*his mouth full*—I ain't got no fourpence.

POLLY. He's very impatient. Come in!

[*Enter GEORGE, his face bronzed, and in full health. He carries a milk-can in his hand, which, after putting his hat on piano, he places on table.*]

GEORGE. A fellow hung this on the railings, so I brought 10 it in.

[*POLLY sees him, and gradually sinks down under table on one side. Then SAM, with his mouth full, and bread and butter in hand, does the same on the other. HAWTREE pushes himself back a space, in chair; remains motionless. GEORGE astonished. Picture.*]

GEORGE. What's the matter with you?

HAWTREE [*rising*]. George!

GEORGE. Hawtree! You here?

POLLY [*under table*]. O-o-o-h! the ghost! the ghost! 15

SAM. It shan't hurt you, Polly. Perhaps it's only indigestion.

HAWTREE. Then you are not dead?

GEORGE. Dead, no. Where's my wife?

HAWTREE. You were reported killed.

GEORGE. It wasn't true.

5 HAWTREE. Alive! My old friend alive!

GEORGE. And well. [*Shakes hands.*] Landed this morning. Where's my wife?

SAM [*who has popped his head from under the tablecloth*]. Hé ain't dead, Poll—he's alive.

[*Polly rises from under table slowly.*]

10 POLLY [*pause; approaches him, touches him, retreats*].

George! [*He nods.*] George! George!

GEORGE. Yes! Yes!

POLLY. Alive! My dear George! Oh, my brother!

[*Looking at him intensely.*] Alive! [*Going to him.*] Oh, my
15 dear, dear brother! [*In his arms*—how could you go and do so? [*Laughs hysterically.*]

[*SAM goes to POLLY. GEORGE places POLLY in SAM's arms.*

SAM kisses POLLY'S hand violently. HAWTREE comes up, stares—business. SAM with a stamp of his foot moves away.]

GEORGE. Where's Esther?

HAWTREE. Here—in this house.

GEORGE. Here!—doesn't she know I'm back?

20 POLLY. No—how should she?

GEORGE [*to HAWTREE*]. Didn't you get my telegram?

HAWTREE. No; where from?

GEORGE. Southampton! I sent it to the Club.

HAWTREE. I haven't been there these three days.

25 POLLY [*hysterically*]. Oh, my dear, dear, dear dead-and-gone, come-back-all-alive-oh, brother George! [*George passes her.*]

SAM. Glad to see yer, sir.

GEORGE. Thank you, Gerridge. [*Shakes hands.*] Same to you—but Esther?

POLLY [*back to audience, and 'kerchief to her eyes*]. She's asleep in her room.

[*GEORGE is going; POLLY stops him.*]

POLLY. You mustn't see her.

5

GEORGE. Not see her!—after this long absence!—why not?

HAWTREE. She's ill today. She has been greatly excited. The news of your death, which we all mourned, has shaken her terribly.

GEORGE. Poor girl! Poor girl!

10

POLLY. Oh, we all cried so when you died!—[*crying*]—and now you're alive again, I want to cry ever so much more. [*Crying.*]

HAWTREE. We must break the news to her gently and by degrees. [*Crosses behind, to fire, taking his tea with him.*]

15

SAM. Yes, if you turn the tap on to full pressure, she'll explode. [*SAM turns to HAWTREE, who is just raising cup to his lips and brings it down on saucer with a bang; both annoyed.*]

GEORGE. To return, and not to be able to see her—to love her—to kiss her! [*Stamps.*]

20

POLLY. Hush!

GEORGE. I forgot—I shall wake her!

POLLY. More than that—you'll wake the baby.

GEORGE. Baby!—what baby?

POLLY. Yours.

25

GEORGE. Mine?—mine?

POLLY. Yes—yours and Esther's. Why, didn't you know there was a baby?

GEORGE. No!

POLLY. La! the ignorance of these men!

30

HAWTREE. Yes, George, you're a father. [*At fireplace.*]

GEORGE. Why wasn't I told of this? Why didn't you write?

POLLY. How could we when you were dead?

SAM. And 'adn't left your address. [*Looks at HAWTREE, who turns away quickly.*]

GEORGE. If I can't see Esther, I will see the child. The
5 sight of me won't be too much for its nerves. Where is it?

POLLY. Sleeping in its mother's arms. [*GEORGE goes to door—she intercepts him.*] Please not! Please not!

GEORGE. I must! I will!

POLLY. It might kill her, and you wouldn't like to do
10 that. I'll fetch the baby; but, oh, please don't make a noise.
[*Going up.*] You won't make a noise—you'll be as quiet as
you can, won't you? Oh! I can't believe it!

[*Exit POLLY. SAM dances breakdown and finishes up by looking at HAWTREE, who turns away astonished. SAM disconcerted; sits on chair by table; GEORGE at door.*]

GEORGE. My baby—my ba— It's a dream! [*To SAM.*]
You've seen it—what's it like?

15 SAM. Oh! it's like a—like a sort of—infant—white and—
milky, and all that.

[*Enter POLLY with baby wrapped in shawls; GEORGE shuts door and meets her.*]

POLLY. Gently! gently—take care! Esther will hardly
have it touched.

[*SAM rises and gets near to GEORGE.*]

GEORGE. But I'm its father.

20 POLLY. That don't matter. She's very particular.

GEORGE. Boy or girl?

POLLY. Guess.

GEORGE. Boy! [*POLLY nods. GEORGE proud.*] What's
his name?

25 POLLY. Guess.

GEORGE. George? [POLLY *nods*.] Eustace? [POLLY *nods*.] Fairfax? Algernon? [POLLY *nods; pause*.] My names!

SAM [to GEORGE]. You'd 'ardly think there was room enough in 'im to 'old so many names, would yer?

[HAWTREE *looks at him—turns to fire*. SAM *disconcerted again*. *Sits*.]

GEORGE. To come back all the way from India to find 5
that I'm dead, and that you're alive. To find my wife a
widow with a new love aged—How old are you? I'll buy you
a pony tomorrow, my brave little boy! What's his weight?
I should say two pound nothing. My—baby—my boy!
[*Bends over him and kisses him*.] Take him away, Polly, for 10
fear I should break him. [POLLY *takes child, and places it in*
cradle.]

HAWTREE [*crosses to piano*. (*Passes SAM, front—stares—*
business. SAM *goes round to fireplace, flings down bread and*
butter in a rage and drinks his tea out of saucer]. But tell us 15
how it is you're back—how you escaped? [HAWTREE *leans*
against piano.]

GEORGE [*coming down*]. By and by. Too long a story just
now. Tell me all about it. [POLLY *gives him chair*.] How is
it Esther's living here? 20

POLLY. She came back after the baby was born, and the
furniture was sold up.

GEORGE. Sold up? What furniture?

POLLY. That you bought for her.

HAWTREE. It couldn't be helped, George—Mrs. D'Alroy 25
was so poor.

GEORGE. Poor! But I left her £600 to put in the bank!

HAWTREE. We *must* tell you. She gave it to her father,
who banked it in his own name.

SAM. And lost it bettin'—every copper. 30

GEORGE. Then she's been in want?

POLLY. No—not in want. Friends lent her money.

GEORGE [seated]. What friends? [Pause; he looks at

POLLY, who indicates HAWTREE.] You?

POLLY. Yes.

GEORGE [rising and shaking HAWTREE's hand]. Thank you, old fella. [HAWTREE droops his head.]

SAM [aside]. Now who'd a thought that long swell 'ad it in 'im? 'E never mentioned it.

GEORGE. So Papa Eccles had the money? [Sitting again.]

SAM. And blued it. [Sits on corner of table.]

POLLY [pleadingly]. You see father was very unlucky on the race-course. He told us that if it hadn't been that all his calculations were upset by a horse winning who had no business to, he should have made our fortunes. Father's been unlucky, and he gets tipsy at times, but he's a very clever man, if you only give him scope enough.

SAM. I'd give 'im scope enough!

GEORGE. Where is he now?

SAM. Public-house.

GEORGE. And how is he?

SAM. Drunk!

[POLLY pushes him off table. SAM sits at fireplace up stage.]

GEORGE [to HAWTREE]. You were right. There is "something" in caste. [Aloud.] But tell us all about it. [Sits.]

POLLY. Well, you know, you went away; and then the baby was born. Oh! he was such a sweet little thing, just like—your eyes—your hair. [Standing by GEORGE, who is sitting.]

GEORGE. Cut that!

POLLY. Well, baby came; and when baby was six days old, your letter came, Major [to HAWTREE]. I saw that it was from India, and that it wasn't in your hand [to George]; I guessed what was inside it, so I opened it unknown to her, and I read there of your capture and death. I daren't tell

her. I went to father to ask his advice, but he was too tipsy to understand me. Sam fetched the doctor. He told us that the news would kill her. When she woke up, she said she had dreamed there was a letter from you. I told her, no; and day after day she asked for a letter. So the doctor advised us to write one as if it came from you. So we did. Sam and I and the doctor told her—told Esther, I mean—that her eyes were bad and she mustn't read, and we read our letter to her; didn't we, Sam? But, bless you! she always knew it hadn't come from you! At last, when she was stronger, we told her all. 10

GEORGE [*after a pause*]. How did she take it?

POLLY. She pressed the baby in her arms, and turned her face to the wall. [*A pause.*] Well, to make a long story short, when she got up, she found father had lost all the money you had left her. There was a dreadful scene between them. 15 She told him he'd robbed her and her child, and father left the house, and swore he'd never come back again.

SAM. Don't be alarmed—'e did come back. [*Sitting by fire.*]

POLLY. Oh, yes; he was too good-hearted to stop long 20 from his children. He has his faults, but his good points, when you find 'em, are wonderful!

SAM. Yes, when you find 'em. [*Rises, gets bread and butter from table, and sits at corner of table.*]

POLLY. So she had to come back here to us, and that's all. 25

GEORGE. Why didn't she write to my mother?

POLLY. Father wanted her; but she was too proud—she said she'd die first.

GEORGE [*rising, to HAWTREE*]. There's a woman! Caste's all humbug. [*Sees sword over mantelpiece.*] That's my sword 30 [*crossing round*] and a map of India, and that's the piano I bought her—I'll swear to the silk.

32. *I'll swear to the silk.* "In the sixties the front cover of pianos was often faced with silk" (*Pemberton*).

POLLY. Yes; that was bought in at the sale.

GEORGE [to HAWTREE]. Thank ye, old fella.

HAWTREE. Not by me—I was in India at the time.

GEORGE. By whom, then?

5 POLLY. By Sam. [SAM *winks to her to discontinue.*] I shall! He knew Esther was breaking her heart about anyone else having it, so he took the money he'd saved up for our wedding, and we're going to be married now—ain't we, Sam?

SAM [*rushing to GEORGE and pulling out circulars from his*
10 *pocket*]. And hope by constant attention to business, to merit—[POLLY *pushes him away.*]

POLLY. Since you died it hasn't been opened, but if I don't play it tonight, may I die an old maid! [*Goes up.*
GEORGE *crosses to SAM, and shakes his hand, then goes up*
15 *stage, pulls up blind, and looks into street.* SAM *turns up and meets POLLY by top of table.*]

HAWTREE [*aside*]. Now who'd have thought that little cad
had it in him? He never mentioned it. [*Aloud.*] Apropos,
George, your mother—I'll go to the Square, and tell her of—
20 [*Takes hat from piano.*]

GEORGE. Is she in town? [*At cradle.*]

HAWTREE. Yes. Will you come with me?

GEORGE. And leave my wife?—and such a wife!

HAWTREE. I'll go at once. I shall catch her before dinner.
25 Goodby, old fellow. Seeing you back again, alive and well, makes me feel quite—that I quite feel—[*Shakes GEORGE's hand. Goes to door, then crosses to SAM, who has turned POLLY's tea into his saucer, and is just about to drink; seeing HAWTREE, he puts it down quickly, and turns his back.*] Mr.
30 Gerridge, I fear I have often made myself very offensive to you.

SAM. Well, sir, yer 'ave.

HAWTREE [*at bottom of table*]. I feared so. I didn't know you then. I beg your pardon. Let me ask you to shake
35 hands—to forgive me, and forget it. [*Offering his hand.*]

SAM [*taking it*]. Say no more, sir; and if ever I've made myself offensive to you, I ask your pardon; forget it and forgive me. [*They shake hands warmly; as HAWTREE crosses to door, recovering from SAM's hearty shake of the hand, SAM runs to him.*] Hi, sir! When yer marry that young lady as I know you're engaged to, if you should furnish a house, and require anything in my way—[*He brings out circular; begins to read it.* POLLY comes down and pushes SAM away, against HAWTREE. SAM goes and sits on low chair by fireplace, down stage, disconcerted, cramming circulars into his pocket.] 10

HAWTREE. Goodby, George, for the present. [*At door.*] By, Polly. [*Resumes his Pall Mall manner as he goes out.*] I'm off to the Square. [*Exit.*]

GEORGE [*at cradle*]. But Esther?

POLLY [*meets GEORGE*]. Oh, I forgot all about Esther. 15 I'll tell her all about it.

GEORGE. How? [*By door.*]

POLLY. I don't know; but it will come. Providence will send it to me, as it has sent you, my dear brother. [*Embracing him.*] You don't know how glad I am to see you back again! 20 You must go. [*Pushing him.* GEORGE takes hat off piano.] Esther will be getting up directly. [*At door with GEORGE, who looks through keyhole.*] It's no use looking there; it's dark.

GEORGE [*at door*]. It isn't often a man can see his own 25 widow.

POLLY. And it isn't often that he wants to! Now, you must go. [*Pushing him off.*]

GEORGE. I shall stop outside.

SAM. And I'll whistle for you when you may come in. 30

POLLY. Now—hush!

GEORGE [*opening door wide*]. Oh, my Esther, when you know I'm alive! I'll marry you all over again, and we'll have a second honeymoon, my darling. [*Exit.*]

POLLY. Oh, Sam, Sam! [*Commencing to sing and dance.* 35

SAM also dances; they meet in center of stage, join hands, and dance around two or three times, leaving SAM on the left of POLLY, near table. POLLY going down.] Oh, Sam, I'm so excited, I don't know what to do. What shall I do—what shall I do?

SAM [*taking up HAWTREE's bread and butter*]. 'Ave a bit of bread and butter, Polly.

POLLY. Now, Sam, light the gas; I'm going to wake her up. [*Opening door*.] Oh, my darling, if I dare tell you! 10 [*Whispering*.] He's come back! He's alive! He's come back! He's come back! Alive! Alive! Alive! Sam, kiss me!

[SAM rushes to POLLY, kisses her, and she jumps off, SAM shutting the door.]

SAM [*dances shutter-dance*]. I'm glad the swells are gone; now I can open my safety-valve, and let my feelings escape. 15 To think of 'is comin' back alive from India just as I am goin' to open my shop. Perhaps he'll get me the patronage of the Royal Family. It would look stunnin' over the door, a lion and a unicorn, a-standin' on their hind legs, doin' nothin' furiously, with a lozenge between 'em—thus. [*Seizes* 20 *plate on table, puts his left foot on chair by table, and imitates the picture of the Royal arms*.] Polly said I was to light up, and whatever Polly says must be done. [*Lights brackets over mantelpiece, then candles; as he lights the broken one, says*.] Why this one is for all the world like old Eccles! [*Places* 25 *candles on piano and sits on music-stool*.] Poor Esther! to think of my knowin' her when she was in the ballet line—then in the 'onorable line; then a mother—no, honorables is "mamas"—then a widow, and then in the ballet line again!

13. *shutter-dance*. "Strictly, a double-shuffle dance on the cellar trapdoor in a public house—used for dancing because of its resonance. Here the term apparently means no more than *double-shuffle, breakdown*" (*Pemberton*).

17. *It would look stunnin'*, etc., a play on the coat-of-arms of the royal family of England.

—and 'im to come back [*growing affected*]—and find a baby, with all 'is furniture and fittin's ready for immediate use [*crossing back of table during last few lines, sits in chair left of table*]—and she, poor thing, lyin' asleep with 'er eyelids 'ot and swollen, not knowin' that that great big, 'eavy, 'ulkin', overgrown dragoon is prowlin' outside, ready to fly at 'er lips, and strangle 'er in 'is strong, lovin' arms—it—it—it— [*Breaks down and sobs, with his head on the table.*]

[*Enter POLLY.*]

POLLY. Why, Sam! What's the matter?

SAM [*rises and crosses*]. I dunno. The water's got into my meter. 10

POLLY. Hush! Here's Esther.

[*Enter ESTHER. They stop suddenly. POLLY down stage.*]

SAM [*singing and dancing*]. "Tiddy-ti-tum," etc.

ESTHER [*sitting near fire, taking up costume and beginning to work*]. Sam, you seem in high spirits tonight! 15

SAM. Yes; yer see Polly and I are goin' to be married—and—and 'opes by bestowing a merit—to continue the favor—

POLLY [*who has kissed ESTHER two or three times*]. What are you talking about?

SAM. I don't know—I'm off my burner. [*Brings music-stool. POLLY goes round to chair, facing ESTHER.*]

ESTHER. What's the matter with you tonight, dear? [*To POLLY.*] I can see something in your eyes.

SAM. P'raps it's the new furniture! [*Sits on music-stool.*]

ESTHER. Will you help me with the dress, Polly? [*They sit, ESTHER upper end, back of table, POLLY facing her, at lower end.*]

POLLY. It was a pretty dress when it was new—not unlike the one Mlle. Delphine used to wear. [*Suddenly clasping her hands.*] Oh!

ESTHER. What's the matter?

POLLY. A needle! [*Crosses to SAM, who examines finger.*]
I've got it!

SAM. What—the needle—in your finger?

5 POLLY. No; an idea in my head!

SAM [*still looking at her finger*]. Does it 'urt?

POLLY. Stupid! [*SAM still sitting on stool. Aloud.*] Do you recollect Mlle. Delphine, Esther?

ESTHER. Yes.

10 POLLY. Do you recollect her in that ballet that old Herr Griffenhaagen arranged?—*Jeanne la Folle*; or *The Return of the Soldier*?

ESTHER. Yes; will you do the fresh hem?

POLLY. What's the use? Let me see—how did it go?
15 How well I remember the scene!—the cottage was on that side, the bridge at the back—then ballet of villagers, and the entrance of Delphine as Jeanne, the bride—tra-lal-lala-lala-lala [*sings and pantomimes, SAM imitating her*]. Then the entrance of Claude, the bridegroom— [*To SAM, imitating swell.*]
20 How-de-do? how-de-do?

SAM [*rising*]. 'Ow are yer? [*Imitating POLLY, then sitting again.*]

POLLY. Then there was the procession to church—the march of the soldiers over the bridge— [*sings and pantomimes*]
25 —arrest of Claude, who is drawn for the conscription— [*business; ESTHER looks dreamily*], and is torn from the arms of his bride, at the church-porch. *Omnes* broken-hearted. This is *Omnes* broken-hearted. [*Pantomimes.*]

ESTHER. Polly, I don't like this; it brings back memories.

30 POLLY [*going to table and leaning her hands on it. Looks over at ESTHER*]. Oh, fuss about memories!—one can't mourn forever. [*ESTHER surprised.*] Everything in this world isn't sad. There's bad news—and there's good news sometimes—when we least expect it.

ESTHER. Ah! not for me.

POLLY. Why not?

ESTHER [*anxiously*]. Polly!

POLLY. Second Act. [*This is to be said quickly, startling SAM, who has been looking on the ground during last four or five lines.*] Winter—the Village Pump. This is the village pump [*pointing to SAM, seated by piano, on music-stool. SAM turns around on music-stool, disgusted.*] Entrance of Jeanne—now called Jeanne la Folle, because she has gone mad on account of the supposed loss of her husband. 10

SAM. The supposed loss?

POLLY. The supposed loss!

ESTHER [*dropping costume*]. Polly!

SAM [*aside to Polly*]. Mind!

POLLY. Can't stop now! Entrance of Claude, *who isn't* 15
dead, in a captain's uniform—a cloak thrown over his shoulders.

ESTHER. Not dead!

POLLY. Don't you remember the ballet? Jeanne is mad, and can't recognize her husband; and don't, till he shows her 20
the ribbon she gave him when they were betrothed. A bit of ribbon! Sam, have you got a bit of ribbon? Oh, that crape sword-knot, that will do. [*Crosses down. SAM astonished.*]

ESTHER. Touch that! [*Rising, coming down*]. 25

POLLY. Why not?—it's no use now.

ESTHER [*slowly, looking into POLLY's eyes*]. You have heard of George—I know you have—I see it in your eyes. You may tell me—I can bear it—I can indeed—indeed I can. Tell me—he is not dead? [*Violently agitated.*] 30

POLLY. No!

ESTHER. No?

POLLY. No!

ESTHER [*whispers*]. Thank Heaven! [*SAM turns on stool,*

back to audience.] You've seen him—I see you have!—I know it!—I feel it! I had a bright and happy dream—I saw him as I slept! Oh, let me know if he is near! Give me some sign—some sound—[POLLY opens piano]—some token of his
5 *life and presence!*

[SAM touches POLLY on the shoulder, takes hat, and exit. All to be done very quickly. POLLY sits immediately at piano and plays air softly—the same air played by ESTHER, Act II, on the treble only.]

ESTHER *[in an ecstasy]*. Oh, my husband! come to me! for I know that you are near! Let me feel your arms clasp round me! Do not fear for me!—I can bear the sight of you!—*[door opens showing SAM keeping GEORGE back]*—it will
10 not kill me!—George—love! Husband—come, oh, come to me!

[GEORGE breaks away from SAM, and coming down behind ESTHER places his hands over her eyes; she gives a faint scream, and turning, falls in his arms. POLLY plays bass as well as treble of the air, forte, then fortissimo. She then plays at random, endeavoring to hide her tears. At last strikes piano wildly, and goes off into a fit of hysterical laughter, to the alarm of SAM, who, rushing down as POLLY cries, “Sam! Sam!” falls on his knees in front of her. They embrace, POLLY pushing him contemptuously away afterwards. GEORGE gets chair, sits, and ESTHER kneels at his feet—he snatches off ESTHER’S cap, and throws it up stage. POLLY goes left of GEORGE, SAM brings music-stool, and she sits.]

ESTHER. To see you here again—to feel your warm breath upon my cheek—is it real, or am I dreaming?

SAM *[rubbing his head]*. No; it's real.

15 ESTHER *[embracing GEORGE]*. My darling!

SAM. My darling! [POLLY on music-stool, which SAM has placed for her. SAM, kneeling by her, imitates ESTHER—POLLY scornfully pushes him away.] But tell us—tell us how you escaped.

GEORGE. It's a long story, but I'll condense it. I was riding out, and suddenly found myself surrounded and taken prisoner. One of the troop that took me was a fella who had been my servant, and to whom I had done some little kindness. He helped me to escape, and hid me in a sort of cave, and for a long time used to bring me food. Unfortunately, he was ordered away; so he brought another Sepoy to look after me. I felt from the first this man meant to betray me, and I watched him like a lynx, during the one day he was with me. As evening drew on, a Sepoy picket was passing. I could tell by the look in the fella's eyes, he meant to call out as soon as they were near enough; so I seized him by the throat, and shook the life out of him.

ESTHER. You strangled him?

GEORGE. Yes.

ESTHER. Killed him—dead?

GEORGE. He didn't get up again. [*Embraces Esther.*]

POLLY [to SAM]. You never go and kill Sepoys. [*Pushes him over.*]

SAM. No! I pay rates and taxes.

24. rates. "In England the term is specially applied to the levying of public money contributions for local purposes, as distinguished from the 'taxes' raised for what are general state purposes" (see *Encyclopædia Britannica* under *Rates*). There are rates for poor relief, police protection, libraries, education, cemeteries, and for various other purposes. This statement by Sam is apparently an expression of independence, with possibly an ironical turn, on the part of a tax and rate paying laborer. Since the play was written in 1867, the year of the Reform Bill which gave all householders franchise and which was hastened in its passage by mob demonstrations on the part of workingmen, one might normally think this a reference to the general situation in 1867. (See J. S. Schapiro, *Modern and Contemporary European History*, pages 75-76.) But the reference to Havelock in line 1, page 104 shows that the period in the play is 1857-1858, the time of the Sepoy Rebellion. This may be, also, an indirect reference to the volume of stories, *Rates and Taxes*, written by Robertson and some of his friends and published in 1866. Each story is supposed to be told by a special rate collector. Robertson's story, "The Poor Rate Unfolds a Tale," is the basis for the play *Caste*.

GEORGE. The day after, Havelock and his Scotchmen marched through the village, and I turned out to meet them. I was too done up to join, so I was sent straight on to Calcutta. I got leave, took a berth on the P. & O. boat; the
5 passage restored me. I landed this morning, came on here, and brought in the milk.

[Enter the MARQUISE; she rushes to embrace GEORGE. All rise, SAM putting stool back.]

MARQUISE. My dear boy—my dear, dear boy!

POLLY. Why, see, she's crying! She's glad to see him alive and back again.

10 SAM [profoundly]. Well! There's always some good in women, even when they're ladies. [Goes up to window. POLLY puts dress in box, and goes to cradle; then beside SAM.]

MARQUISE [crossing to ESTHER]. My dear daughter, we must forget our little differences. [Kissing her.] Won't
15 you? How history repeats itself! You will find a similar and as unexpected a return mentioned by Froissart in the chapter that treats of Philip Dartnell—

GEORGE. Yes, mother—I remember—[Kisses her.]

MARQUISE [to GEORGE, aside]. We must take her abroad,
20 and make a lady of her.

GEORGE. Can't, mamma—she's ready-made. Nature has done it to our hands.

MARQUISE [aside to GEORGE]. But I won't have the man who smells of putty—[SAM, business at back. He is listening,
25 and at the word "putty" throws his cap irritably on table. POLLY pacifies him, and makes him sit down beside her on window]—nor the man who smells of beer. [Goes to ESTHER, who offers

1. *Havelock and his Scotchmen*, etc. The campaign in which George D'Alroy took part was in connection with the Sepoy rebellion in India (1857-1858). This passage refers, apparently, to General Havelock's expedition to rescue men, women, and children besieged at Lucknow (see J. N. Larned, *History for Ready Reference*, Volume III, pages 1779-1785).

her chair, and sits in chair opposite to her. MARQUISE back to audience, ESTHER facing audience.]

[Enter HAWTREE, pale.]

HAWTREE. George! Oh, the Marchioness is here.

GEORGE. What's the matter?

HAWTREE. Oh, nothing. Yes, there is. I don't mind 5
telling you. I've been thrown. I called at my chambers as
I came along and found this. [Gives GEORGE a note. Sits
on music-stool.]

GEORGE. From the Countess, Lady Florence's mother.
[Reads.] "Dear Major Hawtree: I hasten to inform you 10
that my daughter Florence is about to enter into an alliance
with Lord Saxeby, the eldest son of the Marquis of Loam-
shire. Under these circumstances, should you think fit to
call here again, I feel assured—" Well, perhaps it's for the
best. [Returning letter.] Caste! you know. Caste! And a 15
marquis is a bigger swell than a major.

HAWTREE. Yes, best to marry in your own rank of life.

GEORGE. If you can find *the* girl. But if ever you find
the girl, marry her. As to her station—

"True hearts are more than coronets, 20
And simple faith than Norman blood."

HAWTREE. Ya-as. But a gentleman should hardly ally
himself to a nobody.

GEORGE. My dear fella, Nobody's a mistake—he don't
exist. Nobody's nobody! Everybody's somebody! 25

HAWTREE. Yes. But still—Caste.

GEORGE. Oh, Caste's all right. Caste is a good thing if
it's not carried too far. It shuts the door on the pretentious
and the vulgar; but it should open the door very wide for
exceptional merit. Let brains break through its barriers, 30
and what brains can break through love may leap over.

HAWTREE. Yes. Why, George, you're quite inspired—quite an orator. What makes you so brilliant? Your captivity? The voyage? What then?

GEORGE. I'm in love with my wife!

[Enter ECCLES, drunk, a bottle of gin in his hand.]

- 5 ECCLES [*crossing to center of stage*]. Bless this 'appy company. May we 'ave in our arms what we love in our 'earts. [*Goes to head of table. ESTHER goes to cradle, back to audience. POLLY and SAM, half amused, half angry. MARQUISE still sitting in chair, back to audience. HAWTREE facing ECCLES.*]
- 10 GEORGE *up stage, leaning on piano in disgust.*] Polly, fetch wine-glasses—a tumbler will do for me. Let us drink a toast. Mr. Chairman [*to MARQUISE*], ladies and gentlemen—I beg to propose the 'ealth of our newly returned warrior, *my son-in-law.* [*MARQUISE shivers.*] The Right Honorable
- 15 George De Alroy. Get glasses, Polly, and send for a bottle of sherry wine for my ladyship. *My ladyship! My ladyship! M'lad'ship!* [*She half turns to him.*] You and me'll have a drain together on the quiet. So delighted to see you under these altered circum—circum—circum—stangate.

[POLLY, who has shaken her head at him to desist, in vain, very distressed.]

- 20 SAM. Shove 'is 'ead in a bucket! [*Exit in disgust.*]

HAWTREE [*aside to GEORGE*]. I think I can abate this nuisance—at least, I can remove it. [*Rises and crosses to ECCLES, who has got round to side of table, leaning on it. He taps ECCLES with his stick, first on right shoulder, then on left,*

25 *and finally sharply on right. ECCLES turns round and falls on point of stick—HAWTREE steadying him. GEORGE crosses behind, to MARQUISE, who has gone to cradle—puts his arm round ESTHER, and takes her to mantelpiece.*]

HAWTREE. Mr. Eccles, don't you think that, with your

talent for liquor, if you had an allowance of about two pounds a week, and went to Jersey, where spirits are cheap, that you could drink yourself to death in a year?

ECCLES. I think I could—I'm sure I'll try. [*Goes up by table, steadying himself by it, and sits in chair by fire, with the bottle of gin.* HAWTREE *standing by fire.* ESTHER and POLLY *embracing.* *As they turn away from each other—*]

GEORGE [*coming across with ESTHER.* Come and play me that air that used to ring in my ears as I lay awake, night after night, captive in the cave—you know. [*He hands ESTHER to piano.* *She plays the air.*]

MARQUISE [*bending over cradle, at end.* My grandson!]

[*ECCLES falls off the chair in the last stage of drunkenness, bottle in hand.* HAWTREE, *leaning one foot on chair from which ECCLES has fallen, looks at him through eyeglass.* SAM *enters, and goes to POLLY, behind cradle, and, producing wedding ring from several papers, holds it up before her eyes.* ESTHER *plays until curtain drops.*]

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I QUESTIONS

1. Draw a diagram of the stage as for Acts I and II.
2. What happens during the third act?
3. What is accomplished for the audience by the stage setting here?
4. What explanatory material is given in Polly's opening soliloquy? In the conversation between Polly and Sam?
5. Has there been any preparation for the device which Polly employs to let Esther know of George's return?
6. Indicate in order the methods employed to maintain the interest of the audience through the last act.
7. Are you satisfied with the closing of the play? Do you think it represents what would normally happen in life?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The most dramatic moment in Act III.
2. Other stories or authentic accounts of the return of a man or woman who had supposedly been killed.
3. A character sketch in your own words of any character in the play.

THE PLAY AS A WHOLE

I. QUESTIONS

1. Summarize in a phrase or sentence the main situation of each act.
2. What is the effect of having on the stage at the close of each act all the characters that have been introduced?
3. Go through the play and select dramatic scenes or situations.
4. What is the turning point in the story?
5. From the point of view of the emotional interest of the audience, what is the most important scene of the play?
6. What character is predominant? If more than one, who are they?
7. What is the function of each of the important characters?
8. Summarize and indicate the use of soliloquies.
9. Consider *Caste* as a transition play marking the beginnings of modern English drama; compare the situation, the conversation, and the treatment of character with similar aspects in contemporary literature. What do you find here that appeals to you as artificial and unreal?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Similarities and differences in subject-matter between this play and plays of Shakespeare, Goldsmith, and Sheridan, or modern plays you have read.
2. Your final impression of *Caste*.

3. Sam and Eccles as representatives of the laboring class you know.

4. George's mother—are her actions consistent?

5. Your favorite character in the play.

6. George's attitude toward caste.

7. Esther compared with heroines in stories and other plays with which you are familiar.

8. Read "The Poor Rate Unfolds a Tale." Point out some of the changes Robertson made between the story, which was the basis of *Caste*, and the play.

9. Read Pinero's *Trelawney of the "Wells."* Report on Tom Wrench as representing Robertson, and on the play as revealing conditions in the English theatres of Robertson's times.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

I. PLAYS AND STORIES

Society. A pleasing sentimental comedy with some delightful interludes; the penniless young man of good rank wins the orphan he loves, falls heir to a fortune and a title, and is, in spite of all opposition, elected to Parliament.

School. A boarding-school comedy with some clever conversation.

The Poor Rate Unfolds a Tale. This story of Robertson's gave him the basis for the situation in *Caste* (printed in T. Edgar Pemberton's edition of *Society and Caste*, D. C. Heath and Company, 1905).

A. W. Pinero, *Trelawney of the "Wells."* The prototype of Tom Wrench, the hero of this play, is Robertson; the incident of the lost manuscript of Wrench's play is suggested by an actual experience of Robertson's (see Clement Scott, *The Drama of Yesterday and Today*, Volume I, pages 496-497); and the play itself represents the theatrical conditions of Robertson's time.

II. MATERIAL ON ROBERTSON'S LIFE AND
HIS DRAMATIC BACKGROUND

- William Archer, *Real Conversations* (William Heinemann, 1904), page 107 ff.
- T. H. Dickinson, *The Contemporary Drama of England* (Little, Brown and Company, 1917), pages 42-48.
- Augustin Filon, *The English Stage* (Dodd, Mead and Company, 1897), Chapters II, III, and IV.
- T. Edgar Pemberton, Introduction to his edition of *Society and Caste*, (D. C. Heath and Company, 1905).
- Clement Scott, *The Drama of Yesterday and Today* (The Macmillan Company, 1899), Volume I, Chapters XIV, XV.
- George Bernard Shaw, *Dramatic Opinions and Essays* (Brentano's, 1907), Volume II, pages 281-285.

MILESTONES
(1912)

BY

ARNOLD BENNETT

AND

EDWARD KNOBLOCK

Milestones is here reprinted by special permission of George H. Doran Company, publishers, New York. For permission to perform, apply to the publishers.

INTRODUCTION TO *MILESTONES*

I. ENOCH ARNOLD BENNETT (1867-)

Enoch Arnold Bennett, author and journalist, was born in North Staffordshire, England, May 27, 1867, and was educated at Newcastle Middle School. He first took up law, but in 1893 he abandoned this profession to become assistant editor of *Woman*, an English magazine, and succeeded to the editorship in 1896. Since 1900, when he resigned from the editorship, he has devoted himself exclusively to literature. These facts one gleans from *Who's Who*.

But the most satisfactory introduction to the man himself one will probably secure through his literary autobiography, *The Truth about an Author*. This is the story of Bennett's experiences as a newspaper correspondent, a clerk in a lawyer's office, a book collector, a "free-lance" artist, a journalist, an editor, a writer of sensational and popular serials, a dramatic critic, a professional reviewer, a writer of farces and other plays, and finally an established novelist and man of letters. All this he tells with a delightful self-assurance which would be merely amusing egotism if it came from one who had not succeeded so remarkably in all of his literary endeavors. Here is a satisfied view which he gives of himself after he has "arrived" in literary London:

This young man had invaded the town as a clerk at twenty-five shillings a week, paying six shillings a week for a bed-sitting room, threepence for his breakfast, and sixpence for his vegetarian dinner. The curtain falls on the prologue. Ten years elapse. The curtain rises on the figure of an editor, novelist, dramatist, critic, connoisseur of all arts. See him in his suburban residence, with its poplar-shaded garden, its bicycle-house at the extremity thereof, and its horizon composed

of the District Railway Line. See the study, lined with two thousand books, garnished with photogravures, and furnished with a writing-bureau and a chair and nothing else. See the drawing-room with its artistic wall-paper, its Kelmscotts, its water-colors of a pallid but indubitable distinction, its grand piano, on which are a Wagnerian score and Bach's Two-part Inventions. See the bachelor's bedroom, so austere and precise, wherein Boswell's *Johnson* and Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal* exist peaceably on the night-table. The entire machine speaks with one voice, and it tells you that there are no flies on that young man, that that young man never gives the wrong change. He is in the movement, he is correct; but at the same time he is not so simple as not to smile with contemptuous toleration at all movements and all correctness. He knows. He is the complete guide to art and life. . . . He numbers painters, sculptors, musicians, architects, among his intimate friends; and no artistic manifestation can possibly occur that he is unable within twenty-four hours to assess at its true value.

Most people who are familiar with Arnold Bennett's work know him only as a novelist—the historian of the life of the Five Towns, around which some of his best novels are written, the author of *The Old Wives' Tale*; or as an efficiency expert in the art of living (*How to Live on Twenty-Four Hours a Day*). Indeed, if one accepts at face value what is implied in his statements, he would subordinate his career as a dramatist, to which he apparently turned by chance, to that as a novelist. Let him speak for himself:

I have not spoken of the artistic side of this play concoction, because it scarcely has any. My aim in writing plays, whether alone or in collaboration, has always been strictly commercial. I wanted money in heaps, and I wanted advertisement for my books.

And again:

There is an idea abroad, assiduously fostered as a rule by critics who happen to have written neither novels nor plays, that it is more difficult to write a play than a novel. I do not think so. I have written or collaborated in about twenty novels and about twenty plays, and I am convinced that it is easier to

write a play than a novel. Personally, I would sooner *write* two plays than one novel; less expenditure of nervous force and mere brains would be required for two plays than one novel. . . . I would like to note in passing, for the support of my proposition, that whereas established novelists not infrequently venture into the theatre with audacity, established dramatists are very cautious indeed about quitting the theatre. An established dramatist usually takes good care to write plays and naught else; he will not confront the risks of coming out into the open; and therein his instinct is quite properly that of self-preservation. Of many established dramatists all over the world it may be affirmed that if they were so indiscreet as to publish a novel, the result would be a great shattering and a great awakening.

However, one must admit that as a craftsman Bennett has succeeded admirably. Max Beerbohm, a leading English critic, after seeing a production of *What the Public Wants* (1909) called it "one of the best comedies of our times"; *Milestones* (1912) had more than a year's run at the Royalty Theatre in London; *Polite Farces* (1899) are rather better than passable potboilers; *The Title* (1916) is a delightful wartime farce-comedy; and *Body and Soul* (1921) is a clever satire on spiritualism and the mad pranks of a noted English lady.

II. EDWARD KNOBLOCK (1874-)

Edward Knoblock was born in New York City, April 7, 1874, had his college training at Harvard, and immediately afterwards left for England and the Continent, where he has resided since. He became a British subject in 1916. According to Grace Willard (*Theatre*, September, 1915), "at twelve he began writing plays. He continued to write plays until the end of his university years. Then he decided that Europe was the place for him to learn whether or not he was to go on writing them. He was twenty-two when he came to London." From the quotation on the next page, he apparently takes his profession more seriously than does his collaborator, Arnold Bennett:

Knoblock gives a playwright seven dogged years in which to learn his trade In fact he believes that seven years of work will only give a man the mastery of his technique; it takes another seven to arrive at complete self-expression in words.

Though he has written a large number of plays which have been produced, only a few have been printed. *Kismet* (1911), a story of the Orient in the spirit of *The Arabian Nights*, was one of Otis Skinner's greatest successes on the American stage.

III. CHANGES IN THE DRAMA BETWEEN 1867 AND 1912

Between 1867, which marks the first production of *Caste*, and 1912, the date of the appearance of *Milestones*, profound changes, to which Robertson had contributed his part, came about in the English and Continental drama. During the last quarter of the century, Ibsen (1828-1906), the Norwegian, had set the fashion in Western Europe for social drama—the serious treatment on the stage of contemporary problems.¹ The ideal in staging, in situation, in conversation, and in general treatment was to create in an artistic manner for the audience the illusion of everyday life. This represents what is known as realistic drama, the most popular type during these years. The subject-matter was often sordid and unpleasant. Especially was this true of Russian drama. Because the managers of established theatres and the local authorities were often opposed to such plays or were unsympathetic toward them, groups known as “free theatre” societies came into existence in France (Théâtre-Libre, 1887), in Germany (Freie Bühne, 1889), and in England (Independent Theatre, 1891) for private presentation of the new drama. In Ireland, under the leadership of Lady Gregory, there sprang up in 1898 the Abbey Theatre Company in Dublin to contribute its part in this international renaissance. The new social drama, however,

1. For further discussion of Ibsen's influence, see the introduction to his *An Enemy of the People* (pages 304-307.)

represented by the plays of the Continent and England, was only one feature of the Abbey Theatre Company; its activities are largely responsible for the wide popularity of plays representing the life of the folk. In England, in contrast to the conditions prevailing during Robertson's period, the dramatists stood among the leaders in the literary world. In proof of this it is sufficient to mention the names of such writers as Jones, Pinero, Wilde, Barker, Barrie, Galsworthy, Masfield, Drinkwater, Shaw, and Bennett. And the theatre held a place of honor among those in authority. Titles were conferred upon leading dramatists and actors. In the history of English literature, this period, which brings us down to the present, ranks as the greatest in drama since Shakespeare.

IV. *Milestones* CONSIDERED AS SOCIAL DRAMA

Milestones is neither comedy nor tragedy in the conventional sense. It belongs to the modern group of realistic plays known as social drama. It illustrates what we have just read in the preceding section concerning this type. Here one finds serious treatment of a problem of everyday life—a situation based upon the general principle of the progressiveness of the new generation and the conservatism of the old. There is the effect of an almost conscious avoidance of the unusual, the romantic, the melodramatic. In fact it seems to illustrate the principle of the dramatic in the ordinary as expressed by Bennett:

In particular, I would urge that a play, any more than a novel, need not be dramatic, employing the term as it is generally employed. In so far as it suspends the listener's interest, every tale, however told, may be said to be dramatic. Very emphatically a play need not be dramatic in the stage sense. It need not induce interest to the degree of excitement. It need have nothing that resembles what would be recognizable in the theatre as a situation. It may amble on—and it will still be a play, and it may succeed in pleasing either the fastidious hundreds or the unfastidious hundreds of thousands, according to the talents of the author. (*The Author's Craft*, page 83.)

In a sense this play represents a logical outcome of the tendency to create an illusion of commonplace reality, the ideal of Robertson.

As compared with the outstanding English dramas of the past thirty years, however, *Milestones* is more important from the point of view of social significance than as a distinctive literary production. In the situations presented in the successive acts the authors have epitomized the consequences of the industrial revolution of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries in England, with the passing of industrial power from the middle class, the beginnings of modern democracy, and the securing of the balance of power by the labor leaders and the workingmen. An intelligent study of this play presupposes at least some acquaintance with English industrial history from 1860 to 1912. (See the bibliography on page 212.) It is of more than passing interest, in this general connection, that Bennett in his novels is one of the most successful interpreters of various aspects of the social and industrial life of the middle class in England of the past forty years.

An extensive reading list for Bennett and Knoblock will be found on pages 212-215.

TEXT OF THE PLAY

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

JOHN RHEAD
GERTRUDE RHEAD

MRS. RHEAD
SAMUEL SIBLEY

ROSE SIBLEY

NED PYM

EMILY RHEAD
ARTHUR PREECE

NANCY SIBLEY

LORD MONKHURST

THE HONORABLE MURIEL PYM

RICHARD SIBLEY

THOMPSON

WEBSTER

FOOTMAN

*The Scene is laid throughout in the drawing-room of a house in
Kensington Gore.*

The First Act is in 1860.

The Second Act is in 1885.

The Third Act is in 1912.

MILESTONES*

ACT I

1860

[NOTE.—Right and left are from the point of view of the actor.]

The Scene represents the drawing-room of a house in Kensington Gore. The house is quite new at the time: all the decorations, pictures, and furniture are of the mid-Victorian period. On the left three long windows look out on Kensington Gardens. On the right a large double door leads into the back drawing-room. A single door on the same side of the room leads to the hall and stairs. In the center at back a large fireplace with a fire burning in it. The blinds and curtains are drawn; the lamps are lighted.

It is about half-past nine at night of the 29th of December, 1860.

[MRS. RHEAD, a woman of nearly sixty, is sitting on the sofa, crocheting some lace, which is evidently destined to trim petticoats. Her hair is dressed in the style of 1840, though her dress is of the 1860 period. Near her, in an armchair, sits ROSE SIBLEY, a gentle, romantic-looking girl of twenty-one, who is dressed in the height of fashion of the period. She is at work on a canvas wool-work pattern. Cups of after-dinner coffee stand near both ladies.]

MRS. RHEAD. Do permit me to look at your work one moment, my dear Rose.

ROSE. With pleasure, Mrs. Rhead.

*Copyright, 1912, by George H. Doran Company. All rights reserved.

MRS. RHEAD. Very pretty indeed. Nothing could be in better taste than these Berlin wool patterns.

ROSE. I got the design from the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*. It's to be one of three cushions for father's study.

MRS. RHEAD. I had an idea of doing the same sort of thing for my husband, after we moved into the new house here, three years ago. But then, when he died, I hadn't the heart to go on. So I'm crocheting lace now instead
10 for Gertrude's trousseau. Will you have some more coffee?

ROSE. No, thank you.

MRS. RHEAD. Just a drop. Gertrude, pour out—[*She looks about.*] Now where has Gertrude disappeared to?

ROSE. She left the room some moments ago.

15 MRS. RHEAD. Even between dinner and coffee she must be off.

ROSE. But why?

MRS. RHEAD. Do I know, my dear? Just managing the house and managing it, and managing it. Upon my word,
20 Gertrude performs the duties of the place as if it were the foundry and she were John. My son and daughter are so alike.

ROSE [*interjecting enthusiastically*]. One's as splendid as the other.

25 MRS. RHEAD. She keeps account-books now.

ROSE [*rather startled*]. Of the house?

MRS. RHEAD [*nods*]. And she says she shall show John a balance-sheet at quarter-day. Did you ever hear of such behavior?

30 ROSE. She always was very active, wasn't she? It's in the blood.

MRS. RHEAD. It is not in mine, and I am her mother. No! It is all due to these modern ways; that is what it is.

ROSE. I suppose John's rather pleased.

MRS. RHEAD. Yes, John! But what about *your* brother? Will he be pleased? Is Gertrude going to make him the wife his position demands?

ROSE. I'm sure he'll be delighted to have his house 5 managed as this one's managed.

MRS. RHEAD. But will it stop at that? Once one begins these modern ways, one never knows where they will end.

ROSE. I must say I was surprised she ever accepted Sam.

MRS. RHEAD [*deprecatingly*]. Surprised? But why? 10

ROSE. We Sibleys are such an extremely old-fashioned family. Look at father! And I do believe Sam's worse. Yes, I do believe Sam's worse than father. Thank goodness they have your son for a partner—two such slow-coaches, 15 as they are.

MRS. RHEAD. Slow-coaches! My dear, remember the respect due to your father.

ROSE [*eagerly*]. Oh, I adore father, and Sam, too! I wouldn't have either of them altered for the world. But I do think Sam's very fortunate in getting Gertrude. 20

MRS. RHEAD. She also is very fortunate, very fortunate indeed. I have the highest respect for Sam's character, and my hope and prayer is that he and Gertrude will influence each other for nothing but good. But, between you and me, my dear, the first six months will be—well—lively, to say 25 the least.

[GERTRUDE RHEAD *enters by the door from the hall, carrying in her hand a cloak of the latest pattern of the period. She is twenty-one, high spirited, independent, afraid of no one.*]

ROSE. What on earth's that, Gertrude?

GERTRUDE. I've just been upstairs to get it. Help me, will you? I wanted to show it you. [ROSE *helps* GERTRUDE

with the cloak.] I only bought it today, with the money John gave me for Christmas. Thank you— Well?

ROSE. Very daring, isn't it? I suppose it's quite the latest?

5 GERTRUDE. Next year's. Mother says it's "fast."

MRS. RHEAD. I hope you'll put it away before the men come up.

GERTRUDE [*with assumed innocence*]. Why?

MRS. RHEAD. Because Samuel will surely not approve of it.

10 GERTRUDE. I bet you he will.

MRS. RHEAD. Gertrude!

GERTRUDE. The truth is, Rose, mother's only taken a prejudice against it because I brought it home myself this afternoon in a hansom cab.

15 ROSE [*staggered*]. Alone? In a hansom cab?

MRS. RHEAD. You may well be shocked, dear. My lady refuses the carriage, because of keeping the horses standing in this terrible frost. And then she actually hails a hansom-cabriolet! What Samuel would say if he knew
20 I dare not imagine.

GERTRUDE. Well, what harm is there in it, mamma darling? [*Caresses her.*] I do wish you'd remember we're in the year 1860—and very near '61. You really must try to keep up with the times. Why, girls will be riding on the
25 tops of omnibuses some day.

ROSE [*protesting*]. Gertrude!

MRS. RHEAD. I hope I shan't live to see it.

[*Enter THOMPSON, a young butler, from the hall. He collects the coffee cups, putting them all on a tray.*]

GERTRUDE. Is the hot-water apparatus working properly, Thompson?

30 THOMPSON. Moderate, miss.

GERTRUDE [*rather annoyed*]. It ought to work perfectly.

ROSE. What's the hot-water apparatus?

GERTRUDE. It's for the bathroom, you know.

ROSE. Yes. I know you'd got a bathroom.

GERTRUDE. It's just the latest device. John had it put in the week mother was down at Brighton. It was his Christ- 5
mas surprise for her.

ROSE. Yes, but I don't understand.

GERTRUDE. It's quite simple. We have a boiler behind the kitchen range, and pipes carry the hot water up to the bath. There's one tap for hot and another for cold. 10

ROSE. How wonderful!

GERTRUDE. So when you want a hot bath all you have to do——

MRS. RHEAD [*dryly*]. All we have to do is to tell cook to put down a shoulder of mutton to roast. Very modern! 15

GERTRUDE [*caressing her mother again*]. Horrid old dear! Thompson, why is it working only moderately?

THOMPSON [*by the door*]. No doubt because cook had orders that the beef was to be slightly underdone, miss. [*Exit quickly with tray.*] 20

GERTRUDE [*to Rose*]. That was to please your carnivorous daddy, Rose, and he never came.

MRS. RHEAD. I do hope there's been no trouble down at the foundry between him and my son.

ROSE. So do I. 25

GERTRUDE. Why are you both pretending? You know perfectly well there has been trouble between them. You must have noticed the chilliness when our respective brothers met tonight.

ROSE. I assure you, Gertrude, I know *nothing*. Sam 30
said not a single word in the carriage.

GERTRUDE. Well, wasn't that enough? Or does he never speak in the carriage?

ROSE [*to MRS. RHEAD*]. Has John said anything?

MRS. RHEAD. I understood you to say that the reason your father didn't come to dinner was that he had an urgent appointment, quite unexpectedly, at the last moment.

ROSE. Yes, he asked me to tell you and make his excuses.

5 GERTRUDE. Urgent appointment at his club—most likely!

MRS. RHEAD. I wonder what the trouble can have been.

GERTRUDE. You don't, mother. You know! It's the old story—Sam and his father with their set ideas, pulling
10 one way; and John with his go-ahead schemes, pulling the other—with the result——

MRS. RHEAD. The result is that we've had one of the most mournful dinners tonight that I have ever had the pleasure of giving.

15 GERTRUDE. I know! What a good thing we asked Ned Pym. If he hadn't come to the rescue with his usual facetious, senseless chatter, I do believe Sam and John——

MRS. RHEAD [*quickly, stopping her*]. Here are the gentlemen! Gertrude, take that cloak off.

[*Enter from the hall SAMUEL SIBLEY, NED PYM, and JOHN RHEAD. SAMUEL SIBLEY is twenty-eight, heavy, with a serious face, a trifle pompous, but with distinct dignity. NED PYM, who is a little over twenty, is the young dandy of the day; handsome, tall, with excellent manners, which allow him to carry off his facetious attitude rather successfully. JOHN RHEAD comes last. He is twenty-five, full of determination and purpose. He knows what he wants and is going to get it.*]

20 MRS. RHEAD [*in a smooth tone to ROSE*]. Have you seen the new number of *Great Expectations*, dear?

NED. What's this, Gertrude? Charades?

21. *new number of Great Expectations*. Dickens's *Great Expectations* was first published as a serial (1860-1861) in *All the Year Round*.

GERTRUDE [*flouncing her cloak half defiantly at Sam*]. Paris!

NED [*coming between SAM and GERTRUDE*]. Evidently it has lost nothing on the journey over.

GERTRUDE. Ned, would you mind . . . I'm showing it to Sam. [*To Sam*.] Don't you like it?

SAM [*forcing himself*]. On my betrothed, yes.

NED [*facetiously*]. By the exercise of extreme self-control the lover conceals his enthusiasm for the cloak of his mistress.

GERTRUDE [*appealing to SAM*]. But you do like it—don't you?

SAM [*evasively*]. Isn't it rather original?

GERTRUDE. Of course it is. That's just the point.

SAM [*surprised*]. Just the point?

GERTRUDE [*taking the cloak off and flinging it half pettishly on a chair*]. Oh!

JOHN. It's original, and therefore it has committed a crime. [*Looking at SAM*.] Isn't that it, Sam?

SAM [*gives JOHN a look and turns to MRS. RHEAD with an obvious intention of changing the conversation*]. What were you saying about *Great Expectations*. Mrs. Rhead?

MRS. RHEAD [*at a loss*]. What were we saying about *Great Expectations*?

NED. Well, I can tell you one thing about it; it's made my expectations from my uncle smaller than ever. [*He sits by MRS. RHEAD*.]

MRS. RHEAD. Oh, how is dear Lord Monkhurst?

NED. He's very well and quarrelsome, thank you. And his two sons, my delightful cousins, are also in excellent health. Well, as I was going to tell you; you know how my uncle has turned against Dickens since *Little Dorrit*. I happened to say something about *Great Expectations* being pretty fairish, and he up and rode over me like a troop of cavalry.

MRS. RHEAD [*puzzled*]. A troop of cavalry?

NED. It was at his Christmas party, too, worse luck. He as good as told me I disagreed with him on purpose to annoy him. Now I cannot agree with him solely and simply
5 because he allows me seven hundred a year, can I?

ROSE. Is he so difficult to get on with?

NED. Difficult? He's nothing but a faddist! An absolute old faddist! What can you do with a man that's convinced that spirits 'll turn his dining-table, and that Bacon wrote
10 Shakespeare, and that the Benecia Boy's a better man than Tom Sayers?

MRS. RHEAD. It seems a great pity you cannot do something to please your uncle.

NED. Would you believe it? He even wanted me to
15 join the Rifle Volunteers. Now, I ask you, can you see me in the Rifle Volunteers, me among a lot of stockbrokers and chimney-sweeps?

GERTRUDE. We cannot, Ned.

NED. And in order to raise my patriotism last night—
20 [*Slapping his knee violently.*] By Jove! [*He jumps up.*] By Heavens! Jiggered! Jiggered!

GERTRUDE AND ROSE. Ned!

NED. I am a ruined man! You see before you, kind

9. that Bacon wrote Shakespeare. It was during this period (1848 ff.) that doubts were first raised as to Shakespeare's authorship of the plays attributed to him. "Miss Delia Bacon, who was the first to spread abroad a spirit of skepticism respecting the established facts of Shakespeare's career, died insane on September 2, 1859" (see Sir Sidney Lee, *Life of Shakespeare*, section devoted to *The Bacon-Shakespeare Controversy*).

10. the Benecia Boy . . . Tom Sayers. The Benecia Boy (John C. Heehan) was the champion American pugilist, and Tom Sayers was the English champion of the period (see *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Volume XXII, page 639.)

15. the Rifle Volunteers, a reference to the volunteer army that was organized in localities all over England in 1859 because of the fear of a French invasion. The following is from the *Brighton Herald* for November 19, 1859: "We are glad to see the volunteer movement so well afoot, and hope it may spread until the English soil is so covered with armed men that a Frenchman would as little dare come here on a warlike errand as he would to thrust his ungloved hand into a hornet's nest" (see *English History Source Books: From Palmerston to Disraeli*, pages 22-24).

riends, a man ruined and without hope! Last night my uncle sent me a ticket for the launching of the *Warrior*.

SAM [*with a sneer*]. The *Warrior*! You didn't miss much!

NED. But my beloved aunt was commanded to be in attendance on Her Royal Highness at the said function. 5

. . . Well, I forgot all about it. I repeat I forgot all about it.

My uncle will certainly call this the last straw. There will be no quarterly check for me on New Year's Day.

ROSE. What is the *Warrior*?

JOHN [*bursting out*]. The *Warrior* is a steam-frigate— 10
first vessel of the British Navy to be built entirely of iron. She's over six thousand tons burden, and she represents the beginning of a new era in iron.

ROSE [*adoringly*]. How splendid!

JOHN [*responding quickly to her mood*]. Ah, you agree 15
with me!

ROSE [*enthusiastically*]. Of course! [*She breaks off self-consciously.*] Of course I agree with you.

JOHN [*after a slight pause—quickly*]. This 29th of December marks a great day in the history of the British Navy. 20

SAM [*with a slightly superior smile, trying to be gay*]. Nonsense. All this day marks is the folly of the Admiralty. You may take it as an absolute rule that whatever the Admiralty does is wrong. Always has been, always will be.

2. the launching of the "*Warrior*." "The iron-plated ship of the modern type appears to have been a French idea, first tried by Colonel Paixhaus in 1825. The floating batteries employed in the Crimean War in which Napoleon III was specially interested marked a fresh advance in this direction. Nor does it seem easy to overrate the value of the lesson in scientific seamanship derived from the French and English operations on the Black Sea, 1854-1855. The result was the invitation of the Admiralty for designs from all quarters, the ordering the *Warrior*, designed by Mr. Scott Russell, in 1859, completed in 1861. This vessel was equipped with a battery extending her whole length. Before the fifties were out, the naval and national mind had been familiarized with the idea of mastless ships long repulsive to the national sense of the picturesque at sea. The *Warrior*, however, was furnished with sails in addition to steam and marked an epoch in the development not only of the English navy but of the navies of the world, as the first completely iron ship ever built" (T. H. S. Escott, *Social Transformations of the Victorian Age*, pages 317-318. See also Traill, *Social England*, Volume VI, pages 271-273).

The *Great Eastern* was the champion White Elephant of the age. And now the *Warrior* has gone her one better.

JOHN. Sam, you don't know what you're saying. How can you talk about the *Warrior* when you've never even so
5 much as laid eyes on the ship?

SAM. Well, have *you*?

JOHN. Yes—I went to the launch today.

SAM. You?

MRS. RHEAD. Why did you go, John? You never said
10 a word to me.

JOHN. I went on business.

SAM. You told me you had an appointment with the bank.

JOHN. I only said that because I couldn't stop to argue
15 just then.

SAM. So you said what wasn't so.

JOHN. I said what was necessary at the moment. I wasn't going to leave you in the dark; never fear.

SAM [*curtly controlling himself*]. I see. [*A slight pause; then*
20 SAM *turns abruptly to GERTRUDE and says gently*] Come and sing, dear. I haven't heard you sing for over a fortnight.

GERTRUDE [*moved by the quarrel—after a pause in a low voice*]. What shall I sing?

SAM. Sing "Nita, Juanita."

25 GERTRUDE. No! I heard Madame Sainton Dolby sing it last week.

SAM. Do!—to please me.

[GERTRUDE *turns toward the double doors and goes off in silence with SAM. NED is about to follow instantly, but MRS. RHEAD stops him.*]

MRS. RHEAD [*whispering*]. Give them just one instant alone.

30 NED. I beg pardon. My innocence at fault. [*The song*

is heard.] [*A pause.*] Is that long enough? [MRS. RHEAD taps him, then she goes off after the others, followed by NED. A slight pause.]

ROSE [*moving toward the doors*]. What a lovely voice she has! 5

JOHN [*abruptly, closing the doors*]. I want to talk to you.

ROSE [*nervous and self-conscious*]. To me?

JOHN. I wish I'd asked you to come to that launch.

ROSE. Where was it?

JOHN. At Greenhithe; only two stations beyond the 10
foundry. Would you have come?

ROSE. I should have loved to . . . if Gertrude had come,
too.

JOHN [*musings*]. You should have seen her go into the
water—the wave she made! All that iron—and rivets! 15
Iron, mind you. . . . And then float like a cork. I never
was at a launch before, and it gave me a thrill, I can tell you.
And I'm not easily thrilled.

ROSE [*adoringly, but restraining herself*]. I'm sure you're
not. I do wish I'd seen it. It must have been almost sublime. 20

JOHN. You'd have understood. You'd have felt like I
did. Do you know how I know that?

ROSE [*shaking her head*]. No——

JOHN. By the way you said "How splendid!" when I was
telling the others just now. 25

ROSE. Really!

JOHN. Fact! That gave me more encouragement in
my schemes than any words I ever heard.

ROSE. Please don't say that. Gertrude is always on
your side. She's so like you in every way. 30

JOHN. Yes, Gertrude's all right. But she's got no poetry
in her, Gertrude hasn't. That's the difference between you
and her. She's very go-ahead; but she doesn't feel. You feel.

ROSE [*breathless*]. Do I, John? [*She looks down.*]

JOHN. I'll tell you something—tears came into my eyes when that frigate took the water. Couldn't help it! [ROSE raises her eyes to his.] In thirty years every big ship in the world will be built of iron. Very few people today believe
5 in iron for ship-building, and I know there's a lot of silly, easy sarcasm about it—especially in the papers. But it's coming! It's coming!

ROSE [*religiously*]. I'm sure you're right.

JOHN. If only your father and your brother thought as
10 you do!

ROSE [*faintly*]. Yes.

JOHN. I'm in the minority, you see; two partners against one. If my father had lived, I know which side *he'd* have been on! I shouldn't have been in the minority then.

15 ROSE. You'd have been equal.

JOHN [*enthusiastically*]. No! We should certainly have rolled your excellent father and brother straight into the Thames!

ROSE [*amiably protesting*]. Please——

20 JOHN [*smiling*]. Forgive me—you know what I mean, don't you?

ROSE. I love to see you when you are enthusiastic!

JOHN. It's so plain. We've got probably the largest iron foundry on Thames-side. But our business isn't increasing
25 as quickly as it used to do. It can't. We've come to about the limit of expansion on present lines. Ship-building is simply waiting for us. There it is—asking to be picked up! We're *in* iron. We know all about iron. The ships of the future will be built of nothing but iron. And we're right in
30 the middle of the largest port in the world. What more can anyone want? But no! They won't see it! They—will—not—see—it!

ROSE. I wonder why they won't!

JOHN. Simply because they can't.

ROSE. Then one oughtn't to blame them.

JOHN. Blame them! Good Heavens, no! I don't blame them. I'm fond of them, and I rather feel for them. But that's just why I want to smash them to smithereens! They've got to yield. The people who live in the past *must* yield to the people who live in the future. Otherwise, the earth would begin to turn the other way round, and we should be back again in the eighteenth century before we knew where we were, making for the Middle Ages.

ROSE. Then you think a conflict is unavoidable? 10

JOHN. Absolutely unavoidable! That's the point. It's getting nearer every hour. . . . Why is your father not here tonight?

ROSE. I don't know, but I was afraid —

JOHN. *I* know and *Sam* knows. It must be because he 15 has heard somehow of an enterprise I am planning, and the news has upset him. He's vexed.

ROSE. Poor dear old thing! Then you've started a scheme already?

JOHN [*nods*]. I have. But I can't carry it out alone. 20

ROSE. If there is one man in the world who could stand alone, I should have said you were that man.

JOHN. I know. That's the impression I give. And yet nobody ever needed help more than I do. I'm not all on the surface, you know. 25

ROSE. What sort of help?

JOHN. Sympathy—understanding.

ROSE [*low*]. I see.

JOHN. Of course you see! And that's why I suddenly decided I must have a bit of a chat with you —this very night. 30 It's forced on me. And I feel I'm rather forcing it on you. But I can't help it—honestly I can't. Rose, you're on my side, aren't you?

ROSE. I believe you're in the right.

JOHN. Would you like to see me win—[*silence*—]—or lose?

ROSE. I don't think I could bear to see you beaten.

JOHN. Well, then, help me! When you look at me with that trustful look of yours, I can do anything—anything.
5 No other woman's eyes ever had the same effect on me. It's only because you believe in me. No, that isn't the only reason; it isn't the chief reason. The chief reason is that I'm in love with you—there you have it!

ROSE [*sinking her head*]. Oh!—

10 JOHN [*coming to her*]. Curious! I've known you all my life. But I wasn't aware of all that you meant to me, until these difficulties began. You're essential to me. You can't imagine how much depends on just you!

ROSE. Really?

15 JOHN. You're too modest, too womanly to realize it. Why, sometimes a tone of yours, a mere inflection, almost knocks me over— You aren't crying, surely? What are you crying for?

ROSE. It's too much for me, coming like this, with no
20 warning.

JOHN. Rose, be mine! I'll work for you, I'll succeed for you. No woman in this country shall have a finer position than yours.

ROSE. I don't want a fine position—except for you.

25 JOHN. I'm not hard, really.

ROSE. But I like you to be hard. It's when you're inflexible and brutal that I like you the most.

JOHN. Then you do like me a little—sometimes? [*Kisses her hands.*]

30 ROSE. I can't help telling you. I didn't hope for this. Yes, I did. But the hope seemed absurd. Is this real—now?

JOHN. My love!

ROSE. John, you say I don't realize how much I mean to you. Perhaps I do though. But it's impossible for you

to realize how I want to give my life to you, to serve you. No *man* could realize that. A woman could. I shall be your slave. [*John looks at her with a little start.*] Yes, I know it sounds queer for me to be talking like this. But I must. It thrills me to tell you. . . . I shall be your slave. 5

JOHN. Don't make me afraid, my darling!

ROSE. Afraid?

JOHN. Afraid of being unworthy.

ROSE. Please. . . . [*A slight pause.*] Has the singing stopped? 10

JOHN. A long time ago.

ROSE. They'll be coming in, perhaps.

JOHN [*vaguely, without conviction*]. No.

ROSE. What will your mother and Gertrude say?

JOHN. You know as well as I do, they'll be absolutely 15 delighted.

ROSE. And father?

JOHN [*alertly*]. Rose, you're mine, whatever happens?

ROSE. Oh, nothing must happen now! Nothing shall happen! 20

JOHN. But suppose I couldn't carry out my scheme without quarreling with your father? And he refused his consent to our being married?

ROSE. My heart would be yours forever and ever. But I couldn't marry without father's consent. 25

JOHN. But——

ROSE. I couldn't——

JOHN. Why not?

ROSE. It would not be right.

JOHN. But you love me? 30

ROSE. Yes, but I love father, too. And he's getting very old. And he's very dependent on me. In any case to give me up would be a great sacrifice for him. To lose me against his will—well, I don't know what would happen!

JOHN. As things are just now—he's bound to refuse.

ROSE. But are you so sure he won't have anything to do with your scheme?

JOHN. You heard Sam!

5 ROSE. Yes; but you haven't discussed your plans very thoroughly with Sam. He seemed quite surprised.

JOHN. Suppose I speak to Sam tonight; tell him everything. At any rate, I shall know then where I stand.

ROSE. Tonight?

10 JOHN. Now! I *might* win him over. Anyhow, he'll do what he can to make things smooth for us with your father—surely! After all, he's engaged to Gertrude!

ROSE. Just as you think best. . . . And Sam's very fond of me, though he never shows it.

15 JOHN. Let me get it over now, instantly. Will you go in to the others?

[ROSE looks at him in silence, then rises and goes to the double doors. JOHN stops her and solemnly and passionately kisses her, then opens the doors and she passes through.]

JOHN [calling into the other room]. I say, Sam! Mother, I want a word with Sam alone.

[SAMUEL enters by the double doors. John closes them behind him.]

SAM [suspicious, and not over-friendly]. What is it? Not
20 business, I hope?

JOHN [with a successful effort to be cordial]. No, no!

SAM [following John's lead, and to make conversation]. I was wondering what you and Rosie were palavering about.

JOHN. Samuel, you've gone right into the bull's-eye at
25 the first shot—Sam. I've just been through a very awkward moment.

SAM. Oh, I see! That's it, is it?

JOHN. I've made a proposal of marriage to my partner's sister. Startling, ain't it?

SAM. No! If you care to know, I was talking to your mother about it last week.

JOHN. About what?

5

SAM. About the betting odds—whether it was more likely to come off this year or next. Your mother was right, and I was wrong—by a couple of days.

JOHN [*startled*]. But you'd none of you the slightest ground. I've never shown— Certainly Rose has never 10 shown——

SAM [*teasingly*]. No, of course not. But you know how people *will* gossip, and jump to conclusions, don't you? I know; I went through it myself, not very long ago either. I remember the clever way in which you all knew about it 15 before. I'd got half-way to the end of my first sentence.

JOHN. Sam, you're devilish funny.

SAM. Even the dullest old Tory is funny once in his life. Am I right in assuming that Rose did not unconditionally refuse your offer?

20

JOHN. She did me the honor to accept it.

SAM. I must confess I'm not entirely surprised that she didn't spurn you.

JOHN. All right, old cock. Keep it up. I don't mind. But when you're quite done, you might congratulate me. 25

SAM [*not effusively*]. I do, of course.

JOHN. I suppose you'll admit, even as a brother, that I'd have to go rather far before I met a woman with half Rose's qualities.

SAM. Yes, Rosie's all right. Of course she's cold; she 30 hasn't got what I call poetry in her. That's the difference between her and Gertrude.

JOHN [*facing him*]. Do you honestly think Rose has no poetry in her? Rose?

SAM. Easy does it, my tulip! Have it your own way!

JOHN [*good-humoredly*]. I suppose where sisters are concerned, all brothers are alike.

SAM. Well, I'm looking at one. We're a pair.

5 JOHN. Shake! [*They shake hands, SAM rather perfunctorily.*] Now, Sam, I'm going to rely on you.

SAM. What for?

JOHN. I don't think you had any fault to find with my attitude toward your engagement, had you? I welcomed
10 it with both arms. Well, I want you to do the same with me.

SAM. But, my dear fellow, I'm nobody in the affair. You're the head of a family; I'm not.

JOHN. But you have enormous influence with the head of a family, my boy.

15 SAM [*rather falsely*]. Why! Are you anticipating trouble with the governor?

JOHN. I'm not anticipating it—but you know as well as I do—probably much better—that he ain't very friendly disposed this last day or two. The plain truth is—he's
20 sulking. Now why? Nothing whatever has passed between us except just everyday business.

SAM. Well, the fact is, he suspects you're keeping something nasty up your sleeve for him.

JOHN. Has he told you?

25 SAM [*somewhat pugnaciously*]. Yes, he has.

JOHN. And what is it I'm supposed to have up my sleeve?

SAM. Look here, Jack. I'm not here to be cross-examined. If there's anything up your sleeve, you're the person to know what it is. It's not my sleeve we're talking about. Why
30 don't you play with the cards on the table?

JOHN. I'm only too anxious to play with the cards on the table.

SAM. Then it is business you really wanted to talk about, after all!

JOHN [*movement of irritation concealed*]. I expect your father's heard about me and Macleans, though how it's got abroad I can't imagine.

SAM. Macleans? Macleans of Greenhithe?

JOHN. Yes. That's what's worrying the old man, isn't it?

SAM. I don't know.

JOHN. He hasn't mentioned Macleans to you?

SAM. He has not. He isn't a great talker, you know. He merely said to me he suspected you were up to something.

JOHN. And what did you say?

SAM. Briefly, I said I thought you *were*. [*Disgustedly.*] But, by gad! I never dreamed you were hobnobbing with the Maclean gang.

JOHN. Macleans are one of the oldest ship-building firms in the South of England. I went to the launch today with Andrew Maclean.

SAM. What's ship-building got to do with us?

JOHN. It's got nearly everything to do with us. Or it will have. Now listen, Sammy. I've arranged a provisional agreement for partnership between Macleans and ourselves.

SAM. You've——

JOHN. Half a minute. Macleans are rather flattered at the idea of a connection with the august firm of Sibley, Rhead and Sibley.

SAM. By God! I should think they were. [*Walks away.*]

JOHN. They've had an output of over 25,000 tons this year. All wood. Naturally they want to go in for iron. They'll pay handsomely for our help and experience. In fact, I've got a draft agreement, my boy, that is simply all in our favor.

SAM. Did you seriously suppose ——

JOHN. Let me finish. It's a brilliant agreement. In three years it'll mean the doubling of our business. And we

shall have the satisfaction of being well established in the great industry of the future. Your father's old. I don't expect him to be very enthusiastic about a new scheme. But you're young, and you can influence him. He'll be retiring soon, and you and I will be together—just the two of us. We're marrying each other's sisters. And we shall divide an enormous fortune, my boy.

SAM. And have you had the impudence to try to make an agreement behind our backs?

10 JOHN [*controlling himself*]. I've made no agreement. I've only got the offer. It's open to you to refuse or accept. I only held my tongue about it so as to keep the job as easy as possible.

SAM. You had no right to approach anyone without consulting us.

JOHN. I was going to tell you tomorrow. But I guessed from your father's attitude these last two days that something had leaked out. That's why I'm telling you first, Sam—tonight. Come now, look at the thing calmly—reasonably. Don't condemn it offhand. A very great deal depends on your decision—more than you think.

SAM. I don't see that anything particular depends on my decision. If we refuse, we refuse. And we shall most decidedly refuse.

25 JOHN. But it's impossible you should be so blind to the future! Impossible!

SAM. See here, John! Don't you make the mistake of assuming that any man who doesn't happen to agree with you is a blind fool. To begin with, it isn't polite. I know you *do* think we're blind, old-fashioned, brainless dolts, father and I. We've both felt that for some time.

JOHN. I think you're blind to the future of iron ships, that's all.

SAM. Well, shall I tell you what we think of *you*?

We think you've got a bee in your bonnet. That's all. We think you're a faddist in the style of Ned Pym's noble uncle!

JOHN [*his lips curling*]. Me like Lord Monkhurst! Ha!

SAM. Precisely. Don't you go and imagine that all the arguments are on one side. They aren't. Five-sixths of the experts in England have no belief whatever in the future of iron ships. You know that! Iron ships indeed! And what about British oak? Would you build ships of the self-same material as bridges? Why not stone ships, then? Oh, yes, I know there's a number of faddists up and down the land—anything in the nature of a novelty is always bound to attract a certain type of brain. Unfortunately we happen to have that type of brain just now in the Cabinet. I quite agree with my father that the country is going to the dogs. Another Reform Bill this year! And actually an attempt to repeal the paper duty. But, of course, people who believe in iron ships would naturally want to unsettle the industrial classes by a poisonous flood of cheap newspapers! However, we've had enough common-sense left to knock both those schemes on the head. And I've no doubt the sagacity of the country will soon also put an end to this fantastic notion of iron ships.

JOHN [*quietly*]. I see.

SAM. Oh, don't think I'm not fond of iron! Iron means as much to me as it does to you. But I flatter myself I can

16. *Another Reform Bill.* Lord John Russell on March 1, 1860, introduced in Parliament a reform bill to reduce the property qualifications for voting and to distribute the seats more fairly. It was withdrawn before it came to a vote. Back of the agitation for the Reform Bill was an attempt to secure franchise for the working class. Lord Palmerston had just become Prime Minister at this time (see Low and Sanders, *Political History of England*, Volume XII, page 178).

16. *an attempt to repeal the paper duty.* This refers to a bill sponsored by Gladstone. Its purpose was to lower the price of paper so that newspapers would be in reach of all. It was a movement of great importance for popular education. The bill repealing the tax was passed by the House of Commons, but was defeated in the House of Lords. Gladstone, a liberal and progressive, was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Cabinet at this time (see Justin McCarthy, *A History of Our Times to 1880*, Volume III, pages 100-105).

keep my balance. [*More quietly.*] We didn't expect this of you, John, with your intellect.

JOHN [*as before*]. Very well.

SAM. I've made it clear, haven't I?

5 JOHN. Quite.

SAM. That's all right.

JOHN [*still quietly*]. Only I shall dissolve partnership.

SAM. Dissolve partnership? What for?

10 JOHN. I shall go on with Macleans alone.

SAM. You don't mean it.

JOHN. I mean every single word of it! [*He rises. They look at each other.*]

SAM. Then I can tell you one thing. You won't marry
15 Rosie.

JOHN. Why shan't I marry Rosie?

SAM. After such treachery.

JOHN [*raising his voice*]. Treachery! I merely keep my own opinion—I leave you to yours.

20 SAM. Do you think father will let you drag Rose into this fatuous scheme of yours? Do you think he'll give his daughter to a traitor?

JOHN [*sarcastic and cold*]. Don't get on stilts. [*Then suddenly bursting out.*] And what has my marriage got to do
25 with you? When I want your father's opinion, I'll go to your father for it.

SAM. Don't try to browbeat me, John. I know my father's mind, and what's more, you know I know it. And I repeat, my father will never let his daughter marry a——

30 JOHN [*shouting*]. Silence!

[*Enter MRS. RHEAD by the double doors, followed by NED PYM, GERTRUDE, AND ROSE. The women remain silent.*]

NED [*facetiously coming forward*]. Why silence? Go on.

We've only come in because we thought it might interest us. What's it all about? A hint will suffice.

JOHN. Ned, you're a blundering donkey, and you will be a blundering donkey to the end of your life.

NED. My one desire is to please. 5

GERTRUDE [*coming to Sam, in a quiet, firm tone*]. Sam, what's the matter?

SAM. Nothing! We must go! Rosie, get ready. [*Very respectfully to MRS. RHEAD*]. I'm sorry to break up the evening. 10

GERTRUDE. But you can't go like this.

SAM [*with deference*]. My dear Gertrude, please leave matters to your brother and me. You're a woman, and there are things——

GERTRUDE [*stopping him*]. It is possible I am a woman, 15 but I'm a reasonable creature, and I intend to be treated as such.

MRS. RHEAD [*very upset*]. My dear child, remember you are speaking to your future husband.

GERTRUDE. That's just why I'm speaking as I am. I 20 ask Sam what's the matter—[*scornfully*]—and he says, "Nothing." Am I a child? Are we all children?

SAM [*curtly*]. Come, now, Rose.

GERTRUDE. And why must Rose go off like this? She's engaged to John. 25

SAM. Who told you?

GERTRUDE. Her eyes told me when she came out of this room.

MRS. RHEAD. We all knew it, and no word said. We've been expecting it for weeks. [MRS. RHEAD and ROSE *embrace*.] 30

SAM. You are mistaken, Gertrude. Rose is not engaged to John, and she is not likely to be.

GERTRUDE. You object?

SAM. I do, and I know my father will.

GERTRUDE. You object to John for a brother-in-law?

JOHN. Why?—You might at least condescend to tell Rosie, if not me. It's an affair that rather interests her, you
5 see.

SAM. If you must know, John is going to leave our firm.

MRS. RHEAD. John?

SAM. He thinks my father and I are old-fashioned, and so he's leaving us.

10 MRS. RHEAD. John! Leave the firm? Surely you're not thinking of breaking up Rhead and Sibley?

SAM. Sibley, Rhead—and Sibley.

MRS. RHEAD. It was Rhead and Sibley in my young days, when your father and John's were founding it. John, you
15 cannot mean it!

SAM [*sarcastically*]. He's going to build iron ships.

GERTRUDE. And is that any reason why you should make poor Rosie unhappy and spoil her life?

SAM. I do not propose to argue.

20 GERTRUDE. The man who does not propose to argue with me is not going to be my husband.

MRS. RHEAD. Gertrude!

GERTRUDE [*looking at Sam*]. I mean it. [SAM bows.]

MRS. RHEAD. Please don't listen to her, Sam.

25 SAM. All my apologies, Mrs. Rhead.

GERTRUDE. And you, Rosie, what do you say to all this?

ROSE [*humbly and tearfully*]. I—I hardly understand. Sam, what is the matter?

JOHN [*coming to Rose*]. It's quite simple. I believe
30 in the future of iron ships and I have the courage of my convictions. Therefore you are not to be allowed to marry me. You see the connection is perfectly clear. But you shall marry me, all the same!

SAM [*confidently*]. You don't know my sister.

35 NED [*to SAM, facetiously*]. And you don't know John.

SAM [*turning to NED, firmly*]. Ned, go and order my carriage, there's a good fellow.

NED [*going off by the door into the hall*]. Oh, very well. [*He closes the door behind him.*]

MRS. RHEAD. John, John, why are you so set in your own ideas? Everything was going perfectly smoothly. We were all so happy. And now you must needs fall out with your partners over iron ships. Do you prefer your iron ships to Rose's happiness and your own? Is *everything* to be sacrificed to iron ships?

10

JOHN. There need be no question of sacrifice, if ——

SAM. If you can have it your own way. Of course. Mrs. Rhead, your son wants to risk the ruin of all of us. Now, so far as we Sibleys are concerned, we won't allow him to do so. If he still persists in his purpose, very well, that's his lookout. Only—he can hardly be surprised if Rose's family object—and very strongly—to letting him make her his wife. One does not entrust one's daughter or one's sister to a traitor.

15

GERTRUDE. Sam, don't be childish!

20

SAM [*drawing himself up*]. I beg your pardon.

MRS. RHEAD. John, I'm your mother. Listen to me. Give up this idea of yours. For my sake—for the sake of all of us.

JOHN. I cannot.

25

MRS. RHEAD. But if it means so much unhappiness.

JOHN. I should be ashamed of myself if I gave it up. I believe in it. It's my religion.

MRS. RHEAD. John, I beg you not to be profane.

JOHN [*a little quieter*]. I cannot give up my idea, mother. I should be a coward to give it up. I should be miserable for the rest of my days. I could never look anyone in the face, not even my wife. [*Enter NED from the hall.*]

30

NED [*to SAM in a flunkey's voice*]. Carriage is waiting, my lord.

35

SAM. Now, Rose! Good evening, Mrs. Rhead.

GERTRUDE. Just a moment. [*Drawing a ring off her finger*]. Ned! Hand this ring to Mr. Sibley with my compliments.

5 NED. Must I?

GERTRUDE. Yes.

NED [*taking the ring*]. The donkey becomes a beast of burden. [*Handing ring to SAM.*] Sam, you get this, but you lose something that's worth a lot more.

10 SAM [*taking the ring*]. Of course I have no alternative.

ROSE. Goodby, John.

MRS. RHEAD. John, she's going. Will you let her?

JOHN [*rigidly*]. I cannot give up my idea.

SAM [*going into the hall as ROSE stands hesitating*]. Come
15 along, child. I'm waiting.

ROSE [*moving a step toward JOHN*]. Stick to your idea! Let me go! I love you all the more for it!

JOHN. Don't worry, Rose. The future is on our side.

ROSE [*looking straight at him*]. I——[*Her emotion gets
20 the better of her; she turns quickly and hurries from the room.*]

GERTRUDE [*blankly, in spite of herself*]. The future! [*She sinks down on a sofa and bursts into sobs. JOHN stands, looking after ROSE.*]

CURTAIN

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. Summarize the situation for Act I.

2. How do the staging and the costuming help to create the atmosphere of mid-Victorianism? How successful do the authors appear to you to have been in this? Summarize remarks in this act which tend to create the atmosphere of the period.

3. What information do we gain from the introductory conversation of Gertrude, Rose, and Mrs. Rhead?
4. Is there any outstanding character in Act I?
5. Is there any outstanding situation?
6. What centralizes the interest?
7. Discuss this act as a complete one-act play.
8. Dramatically, what is the important scene in this act?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Bennett and Knoblock's conception of the social life of the industrial middle class in the sixties compared with Robertson's presentation of lower and upper classes as revealed in *Caste*.

2. Gertrude and Rose, and John and Sam as contrasts in character.

3. JOHN (line 5, page 133): "The people who live in the past *must* yield to the people who live in the future."

4. SAM (line 12, page 141): "Anything in the nature of a novelty is always bound to attract a certain type of brain."

ACT II

1885

The Scene represents the same drawing-room as in Act I. But twenty-five years have passed. We are now in the year 1885. Consequently great changes have occurred. The furniture has been rearranged and added to. The flowered carpet of the first act has given place to an Indian carpet. There are new ornaments amongst some of the old ones. The room is overcrowded with furniture in the taste of the period. It is about four o'clock of an afternoon in June. The curtains are drawn back and the sun is shining brightly outside.

[ROSE SIBLEY, now MRS. JOHN RHEAD, forty-six years of age and dressed in the fashion of 1885, her hair slightly gray at the temples, is seated writing some notes at a desk near the win-

dows. NED PYM enters from the hall, followed by JOHN RHEAD. The former has developed into a well-preserved, florid, slightly self-sufficient man of forty-six. The latter, now fifty, has not changed so much physically except that his hair is gray and his features have become much firmer. But his manner has grown even more self-assured than it was in the first act. He is in fact a person of authority; the successful man whose word is law.]

JOHN. Oh, you are there, Rosie. I've brought a person of importance to see you.

ROSE [rising]. Ned—[They shake hands.]

NED. Now please don't say what you were going to say.

5 ROSE. And what was I going to say?

NED. That I'm quite a stranger since I came into the title.

ROSE [curtseying and teasing]. Lord Monkhurst, we are only too flattered—I was merely going to say that you look younger than ever.

10 NED [seriously]. Don't I? That's what everyone says. Time leaves me quite unchanged, don't you know.

JOHN. In every way. How old are you, Ned?

NED [with a sigh]. Well, I shall never see thirty again.

JOHN. What about forty?

15 NED. Or forty either. But my proud boast is I'm nearer forty than fifty.

JOHN. Well, it can only be by a couple of months.

NED. Sh!—It's a lot more than you say, Jack.

JOHN. I was fifty in April. There's just five years' difference between us.

ROSE [to NED]. You look more like John's son.

NED. Say nephew; don't be too hard on him.

ROSE. But I do wish you would go out of mourning. It doesn't suit you.

25 NED. Not these beautiful continuations?

ROSE. No!

NED. Well, I'm awfully sorry. But I can't oblige you yet. Please remember I've got three sudden deaths to work off. I think that when a man loses a harsh but beloved uncle in a carriage accident, and two amiable cousins through a misunderstanding about toadstools, all in twelve months, 5 why—[gesture]—the least he can do is to put himself unreservedly into the hands of his tailor.

ROSE. I——

JOHN [stopping her, kindly but rather tyrannically]. Now enough of this graceful badinage. Ned and I are here on 10 business. What are you up to, there, Rose?

ROSE [with eager submissiveness]. I was doing the invitations for the dinner, or rather for the reception.

JOHN. Good. I've got some more names in my study. You'd better come in there with me. 15

ROSE. Yes, love.

NED. Am I invited to this dinner? I generally get very hungry about eight o'clock at nights.

ROSE [teasing]. Yes, I *think* I put you down. It's our wedding-day. 20

NED. Don't tell me how long you've been married. It would age me!

ROSE. Considering that we have a daughter who is turned twenty-two.

JOHN. Yes, Ned, you must face the facts bravely. Old 25 Mr. Sibley died in January, 1860——

ROSE. Sixty-one, love.

JOHN [after a frown at being corrected]. Sixty-one. And we were married in June of the following year. Surely you recall the face Sam pulled when he gave my little Rosie away. 30

ROSE. But, love, it was a great concession for him to give me away at all, wasn't it?

JOHN. Oh, yes!

ROSE. By the bye, he's coming up to town this afternoon.

JOHN. What, here? 35

NED. Oh! But I ought to see old Sam.

ROSE. Stay for tea, and you'll see *him* and his wife, too.

NED. His wife? His what did you say?

ROSE. Now, Ned, it's no use pretending you don't know
5 all about it.

NED. I remember hearing a couple of years ago, before I went to India, that Sam had staggered his counting-house by buying one of these new typewriting machines, and getting a young woman to work it for him.

10 ROSE. That's the person. Her name is Nancy.

NED. Is it? Only fancy; Nancy, Nancy, in the counting-house! I say—are these girl-clerks or clerk-girls going to be a regular thing? What's coming over the world?

JOHN [*shakes his head*]. Passing craze! Goes with all this
15 Votes-for-Women agitation and so on. You'll see, it won't last a year—not a year! Of course, Sam—susceptible bachelor of fifty and over—just the man to fall a victim. Inevitable!

ROSE. She's a very well-meaning, honest creature.

20 NED. You intimate with her, Rose?

ROSE. I went to see her several times after she had her baby. They're living at Brockley.

NED. Baby! Brockley! No more typewriting then. The typewriter has served its turn—eh? Of course it was
25 a great catch for her.

JOHN. Yes, but it wouldn't have been if Samuel hadn't sold out.

NED. How much did he retire with about?

JOHN. Well, you see he was losing three thousand a year.
30 He got £20,000 net cash.

NED. I'm not a financier, but £20,000 cash in exchange for a loss of £3000 a year doesn't seem so bad! Think of the money he'd have made, though, if he'd taken up with your ideas!

JOHN [*ironically*]. You recollect the folly of iron ships? And the bee in my bonnet? [*Laughs.*] There were only four wooden steamships built in this country last year. The rest were iron; and I was responsible for half a dozen of 'em.

NED. What's all this talk about steel for ships? 5

JOHN [*disdainfully*]. Just talk.

NED. Well, of course, if you're building at the rate of six steamers a year, I can understand your generosity in the matter of subscriptions.

ROSE. He is generous, isn't he? 10

NED. Told your wife about your latest contribution?

JOHN. No, I was just going to.

ROSE [*proudly*]. John tells me everything.

JOHN. And Rosie always approves, don't you, Rosie? Ah! The new generation can't show such wives. 15

ROSE [*eagerly*]. Well?

JOHN. I've decided to give ten thousand pounds to the party funds—politics, you know.

NED. You see, it's to save the country. That's what it amounts to practically, in these days. I know, since I've 20 gone into politics.

ROSE. How noble! I'm so glad, John.

NED. And the great secret—shall I tell her, or will you, Jack?

JOHN. Go on. 25

NED. How should you like your husband to be a baronet, Rose?

ROSE. A baronet?

NED. Sir John Rhead, Bart., and Lady Rhead!

ROSE [*ecstatic*]. Is he going to be? 30

NED. As soon as our side comes into power—and we shall be in power in a month. John'll be on the next Honors' List.

ROSE. In a month!

NED. The Budget's bound to be thrown out. They're trying to increase the taxes on beer and spirits—I've studied the question deeply. I know what will happen.

ROSE. How magnificent!

5 JOHN. Then you approve? [ROSE *kisses* JOHN *fondly*.]
That's all we've called in for, just to make sure.

ROSE [*weeping*]. I——

JOHN. What's the matter?

ROSE. I'm only sorry we haven't had a son.

10 NED. There, there!

ROSE [*to* JOHN]. Are they making you a baronet because you're giving ten thousand to the party funds?

NED. My dear woman! Of course not! That's pure coincidence.

15 ROSE [*convinced*]. Oh!

NED. Your beloved John will be made a baronet solely on account of his splendid services to commerce. Doesn't he deserve it?

ROSE. No one better. Do you know, I can scarcely
20 believe it. Who—? Tell me all about it.

JOHN. Well, it's thanks to Ned in the first place.

ROSE. To Ned?

NED [*pretending to be hurt*]. You needn't be so surprised,
Rose. You seem to be unaware that I've gone into politics.

25 Don't you read the newspapers?

ROSE. No, I leave the newspapers to my daughter.

NED. If you did, you'd know that I made a sensation in the Indian Debate, in the House of Lords. All that Afghanistan business, don't you know.

28-29. *Indian Debate . . . that Afghanistan business.* During the latter part of the nineteenth century Russia, then at the height of its power, was the country most feared by England. Read Kipling's "The Bear That Walks Like a Man." In 1885 the Russians advanced into Afghanistan, a buffer state between Russia and the British provinces of India (look up the position on a map). In Parliament eleven million pounds were voted for military purposes against Russia. Of this amount two and a half millions were for the navy (see Sanders and Low, *Political History*, Volume XII, pages 362-364).

ROSE. Really!

NED. Oh, I became quite a nob, at once. Bit of luck me having gone to India, wasn't it? I'd spent the best part of a month in India; so, of course, I knew all about it.

ROSE [*solemnly*]. Of course.

5

NED. The leader of the Opposition said I had a great future!

JOHN. No doubt.

NED [*simply*]. I shall specialize in India and the Navy. You see my father being a rear-admiral, I ought to be familiar 10 with the subject. If fellows like me don't begin to take an interest in our neglected Navy, England'll be playing second fiddle to Russia in five years' time. Mark my word, in 1890. In 1890.

ROSE. Perhaps you'll be in the Government some day? 15

NED. There's no "perhaps" about it. I shall! There's only one difficulty.

ROSE. What's that?

NED [*mysteriously and important*]. I'm told I ought to marry. 20

JOHN [*rather self-consciously*]. Nothing simpler.

NED. I know! I've had seventeen indirect offers this last six months, and that's a fact.

ROSE. None suitable?

NED. I'm afraid of 'em. It's no joke going and marrying 25 a perfect stranger. I want somebody I know—somebody I've known all my life, or at least all hers.

ROSE. And can't you find her?

NED. I can. I *have* done.

ROSE. Who is it, may one ask? 30

NED. Jack knows.

JOHN [*turning to Rose and clearing his throat*]. Ned would like to marry into *our* family, Rose.

NED [*eagerly*]. You know I've been dead sweet on Emily for a couple of years at least. 35

ROSE [*after a pause*]. I know you're very fond of her, and she of you.

NED [*as above*]. You think she is, really?

ROSE. But it seems so queer.

5 JOHN [*peremptorily*]. How queer? We're respectable enough for the young rascal, aren't we?

ROSE. Of course. It would be ideal—ideal! My poor little Emily!

NED. Well, I've got that off my chest. I'll be moving.
10 I must be at the Carlton at three-thirty to settle up John's business with the panjandrum.

ROSE. You'll come back for tea. *She'll be here.*

[*Enter from the hall EMILY and GERTRUDE. Both are dressed to go out. EMILY is a handsome girl of twenty-two. She has fine qualities, combining her father's pluck with her mother's loving nature. But she has been rather spoiled by her parents. GERTRUDE follows. She has grown into a faded, acidy spinster with protective impulses for her niece, EMILY, on whom she spends all her suppressed maternal feelings.*]

EMILY [*slightly disconcerted*]. Why, father! How is it you aren't at the works this afternoon earning our bread-
15 and-butter?

JOHN [*delighted*]. Such impertinence!

ROSE. Emily, I really wonder at you! What your grandmother Rhead would have said to such manners if she'd been alive, I daren't think. And Lord Monkhurst here, too!

20 EMILY. Well, mamma, you see, grandmother isn't alive! [*To NED, who, after shaking hands with GERTRUDE, advances toward her*]. And as for dear old Uncle Ned——[*NED, JOHN, and ROSE are all somewhat put about by this greeting. NED hesitates, his hand half out.*] Aren't you going to shake hands,
25 then?

NED [*shaking hands*]. Why "uncle"? You've never called me uncle before?

EMILY. Haven't I? It seems to suit you.

NED. I'm severely wounded. And I shall retire into my wigwam until you make it up to me. 5

ROSE. You really are very pert, Emily.

EMILY [*affectionately*]. I should have thought you would adore being my uncle. I'm sure I like you lots more than I like Uncle Sam, for instance.

NED. That's better. I'm peeping out of my wigwam now. 10
Only I won't be your uncle. I won't be anybody's uncle. I don't mind being your cousin, if that's any use to you.

GERTRUDE [*sharply*]. He's afraid of being taken for the same age as your auntie, darling.

NED [*to GERTRUDE*]. Half a moment, Gertrude, and I'll 15
try to think of a compliment that will turn your flank.

GERTRUDE. My flank, Ned?

NED. I mean——

EMILY [*to her parents and NED*]. Where were you all off to?

ROSE. Your father and I are going to the study. 20

NED. And I'm going on an errand, but I shan't be long.

JOHN. And may we ask where you and Auntie Gertrude are "off to," Miss Inquisitive?

GERTRUDE. Oh, Mr. Preece is calling for us to take us 25
to the Royal Academy.

EMILY. And then we shall have tea at the new Hotel Métropole, in Northumberland Avenue. It's the very latest thing.

JOHN [*in a different tone*]. Preece? But he was here last 30
Sunday.

EMILY. Yes, it was then we arranged it.

25. *the Royal Academy*, the Royal Academy of Arts. It was founded in 1768 "for the purpose of improving the arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture." It conducts an art school and has regular exhibitions of paintings (see *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Volume 1, pages 106 ff.).

JOHN. I don't like the idea of your seeing so much of Preece. And your mother doesn't like it, either.

ROSE. No, indeed!

GERTRUDE. But why not? He's the cleverest man in
5 your works. You've often said so.

JOHN. He may be the cleverest man in my works; but he isn't going to be the cleverest man in my house. Who gave him leave to take half a day off, I should like to know?

GERTRUDE. He said he had business in the West End.

10 EMILY [*to NED*]. Now if you want to make yourself useful as a cousin, please explain to these called-so parents that they oughtn't to spoil me one day, and rule me with a rod of iron the next. It's not fair. It's very bad for my disposition:

NED [*to JOHN*]. Is this man-about-town the same Preece
15 you were telling me of?

EMILY. There you are, you see! He tells everyone about Mr. Preece. He's as proud as Punch of Mr. Preece.

JOHN [*more kindly*]. Arthur Preece is a youth that I discovered in my drawing office. Last year I took out a
20 patent for him for bending metal plates at a low temperature; and it's attracted some attention. But our relations are purely business.

GERTRUDE. Still, it was you who first asked him to the house.

25 JOHN [*dryly*]. It was. And Rose kept him for tea. It's all our fault as usual. However—[*rising*—]you'll kindly tell Master Preece that you can't give yourselves the pleasure of his society this afternoon.

EMILY. But why?

30 JOHN [*continuing*]. And if he's obstreperous, inform him that *I* am in my study, and rather anxious to know exactly what his business in the West End is.

EMILY [*insisting*]. But why, father?

JOHN [*firmly*]. Simply because your mother and I wish

you to be in this afternoon. Uncle Sam and Aunt Nancy are coming, for one thing.

EMILY [*disdainfully*]. Uncle Sam! Aunt Nancy!

ROSE. Emily! I won't have you bandying words with your father; you seem to have lost all sense of respect. 5

EMILY [*to NED angrily*]. Aren't they tyrants! [*She goes to a little table and takes off her bonnet, in a quick, annoyed way*].

ROSE [*very politely and nicely to GERTRUDE*]. Gertrude, if you aren't going out, could you come into the study about those addresses? 10

GERTRUDE [*somewhat snappishly, taking EMILY's bonnet*]. Of course! [*She goes out quickly*].

JOHN [*to NED*]. Well, you've got to be off then, for the moment. [*All are near the door now, except EMILY, who is drawing off her gloves savagely*]. 15

ROSE [*in a low voice to NED*]. Till tea, then. [*She goes out, nodding her head significantly*].

NED [*hesitating*]. Yes. [*To JOHN*]. But I must just kiss the hand of this new cousin of mine first.

JOHN [*in a peculiar tone*]. Oh! All right! [*He follows ROSE*]. 20

NED [*going up to EMILY, whose face is turned away ingratiatingly*]. Now, I'm not included in this frown, am I?

EMILY [*facing him and bursting out*]. But don't you think it's a shame, seriously?

NED. Of course if you've promised Mr. Preece, and 25 don't want to disappoint him——

EMILY [*with false lightness*]. Oh, Mr. Preece is nothing to me! Only I do want to know where I am. The fact is they let me do as I like in little things, and they're frightfully severe in big things. Not really big things, but—you know— 30

NED. Middling big things.

EMILY. After all, I'm twenty-two.

NED. A mature age.

EMILY [*huffily*]. Oh! Naturally you take their side!

NED. Honor bright, I don't! I tell you I feel far more like your age than theirs. I'm much younger than your father—much! That's why I don't like being called uncle.

EMILY. Really?

5 NED. Really.

EMILY [*confidentially*]. And there's another thing. They oughtn't to treat Auntie Gertrude like that, ought they? She's got more brains than anybody else here.

NED. Than your father?

10 EMILY. No, not than father. I meant mother, and Uncle Sam, and me—and you——

NED. I see.

EMILY. Who is it runs the house? You don't suppose it's mother, do you? Mother is absorbed in father, quite
15 absorbed in him. No! It's auntie does everything. And yet she's nobody, simply nobody. She arranges to take me out, and they stop it without so much as apologizing to her.

NED. Well, you see, she's an old maid.

EMILY. I don't care whether she's an old maid or not.
20 She's the only friend I have. Father and mother are most awfully fond of me and all that, and mother is sweet, isn't she? But still that makes no difference. There are two camps in this house; they're in one, and auntie and I are in the other. And I tell you we have to be regular conspirators, in self-
25 defense. Of course I'm trusting you.

NED [*who has been playing with a book he has picked up from a table*]. You may.

EMILY. For instance, they won't let me read Ouida. They don't even like auntie to read Ouida.

28. *Ouida*, the pen name of Marie Louise (de la) Ramée (1839-1908), an English novelist. Arnold Bennett in his autobiography, *The Truth about an Author*, writes concerning her (pages 20-21): "The one author whom as a youth I 'devoured' was Ouida, creator of the incomparable Strathmore, upon whose wrath the sun unfortunately went down. I loved Ouida much for the impassioned nobility of her style, but more for the scenes of gilded vice into which she introduced me. She it was who inspired me with that taste for liaisons under pink lampshades which I shall always have, but which, owing to puritanical ancestry and upbringing, I shall never be able to satisfy . . . Yes, Ouida was the unique fountain of romance for me."

NED. This isn't Ouida.

EMILY. I know it isn't. That's William Black. They're always throwing William Black at me, and I hate him. I want to read Ouida.

NED. You must wait till you're married. 5

EMILY. I won't. And I do so want to go to the Hotel Métropole.

NED. I thought it was the Royal Academy.

EMILY. The Academy too.

NED. Look here, Emily. Suppose I arrange a little 10
theatre party?

EMILY. Not with father and mother. They'll want to go to something silly.

NED. No. Just your auntie and me—and you, of course.

EMILY. Will you? 15

NED. Rather!

EMILY. You're quite coming out. But will they allow it?

NED. You bet they will.

EMILY. Where?

NED. Anywhere you like. 20

EMILY. Do you know *The Mikado's* been running three months, and I haven't seen it yet?

NED. "Here's a 'How d'you do!' " The Savoy then.

EMILY. Oh! Hurrah! Hurrah! Thanks; you are a 25
dear.

NED [*pleased*]. Am I? That's all right then. Au revoir.
[*Turns to the door.*]

EMILY [*calling him back*]. Cousin! [*She beckons him to come to her.*] What's this secret between you and father and mother? 30

NED. What secret?

2. *William Black*, a British novelist (1841-1898).

21. *The Mikado*, a very successful comic opera by Gilbert and Sullivan, first produced on March 14, 1885. *The Mikado*, *Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, and other comic operas by these two men are still popular.

23. *The Savoy*, a London theatre opened in 1881.

EMILY [*crossly*]. Now you needn't pretend. I could see it as plain as anything when I came in. And when they went out too, for that matter.

NED. I can't stand being bullied.

5 EMILY. Tell me, and I won't bully you.

NED [*solemnly*]. You're going to be related to a baronet.

EMILY [*disturbed*]. They don't want me to marry a baronet, do they?

NED. Foolish creature! No. It's the opposite camp
10 that's about to receive a title.

EMILY [*delighted*]. Father—a baronet!

NED. I'm just off to make the final arrangements now.

EMILY. Truly?

NED. Don't be misled by my modest exterior. I'm a
15 terrific nob—really. [*He turns to go.*]

EMILY [*as he is going*]. Didn't you say something about kissing my hand? One of your jokes, I suppose.

✓ [NED comes and kisses it, then hurries to the door. As he opens it he looks back and says "The Mikado," and hurries out. EMILY stands a moment lost in thought, a smile on her lips. Then she hums, quite unconsciously, "For he's going to marry Yum-Yum, Yum-Yum!" Goes back to the table on which the William Black is lying, picks it up—opens it, reading a bit, then flings the book aside, muttering in disgust, "Black!" THOMPSON enters. He has grown old in the service of the RHEADS.]

THOMPSON [*announcing*]. Mr. Preece.

[*He withdraws. ARTHUR PREECE enters. His age is twenty-five; he is a man of the clerk class, whose talent and energy have made him what he is. He is full of enthusiasm, earnest, but with a rough sense of humor. Rather short and stocky in figure, but important. His clothes are neat and useful—but very simple.*]

PREECE [*excited*]. Good afternoon, Miss Rhead. I'm afraid I'm a little early.

EMILY [*putting on the manner of a woman of the world*]. Not at all, Mr. Preece. I'm sure Auntie Gertrude will be delighted.

PREECE [*vaguely*]. She's not here now, your aunt?

EMILY [*looking round*]. No.

PREECE [*eagerly*]. I wonder if I should have time to tell you something before she comes in. It isn't that it's a secret. But nobody knows yet, and I should like you to be the first. 10

EMILY. How very kind of you, Mr. Preece!

PREECE. I've only just known it myself.

EMILY. It seems to be very thrilling.

PREECE. It is, rather. It's just this. I've succeeded in making mild steel nearly five per cent lighter than it's ever 15 been made before. Nearly five per cent lighter, and no extra cost.

EMILY. Really! How much is five per cent?

PREECE. It's one-twentieth part. You know, it's enormous. 20

EMILY. I suppose it is.

PREECE. I dare say you don't quite realize what it means —this enormous change in the specific gravity. But it *is* enormous.

EMILY. What is specific gravity? In a word? 25

PREECE. It's—Well—Now supposing—Do you mind if I explain that to you some other time? I'd like to, awfully!

EMILY. Oh! Any time!

PREECE. It's quite O. K., you know. And the thing comes to this. Assume the steel for a biggish ship cost £20,000. 30 Under my new process you'd get the same result with steel that weighed about a twentieth less and cost, roughly, £19,000. Net saving of nearly one thousand pounds!

EMILY [*impressed*]. And did you —

PREECE [*continuing*]. And not only that. As the hull weighs so much less, you can carry a proportionately heavier cargo in the same bottom.

EMILY. Well, I never heard of such a thing! And am
5 I really the first to know?

PREECE. You are.

EMILY. And you found out this all alone?

PREECE. Oh, yes! Except the manager, nobody has any idea of what I've been experimenting on.

10 EMILY. Not even father?

PREECE. No.

EMILY. I suppose he knows you *are* experimenting.

PREECE. Of course. That's my job. That's what he took me out of the drawing office for. I'm always experi-
15 menting on something.

EMILY. I expect you're what they call an inventor.

PREECE [*humorously*]. I expect I am. [*Eagerly*]. I'd practically finished this experiment a week ago. But I had to make sure whether there was any manganese left
20 in the steel. I've been getting a friend at the City and Guilds of London Institute to analyze it for me—you know, the big, red building in Exhibition Road. I've just come from there.

EMILY. So *that* was your business in the West End?
[*Preece nods.*] I'm sure auntie and I hadn't an idea it was
25 anything half so romantic.

PREECE. It *is* romantic, isn't it?

EMILY. No wonder you're so excited.

PREECE. Am I? Well, I don't care! It's all right.

20. *City and Guilds of London Institute*, part of a national scheme for technical education in England. "In 1880 an association was formed of the City Corporation and some of the wealthier City Companies under the name of the City and Guilds of London Institute for the advancement of technical education. The scheme of the institute was to establish a central institution at South Kensington, somewhat in the line of the high schools in Germany, and one or more technical schools of intermediate grade in London . . ." Edward VII, then Prince of Wales, accepted the office of first president of the Institute (see *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Volume XXVI, page 493).

That's all I care about. Here's a bit of the steel now. [*He offers her a small sample.*]

EMILY. Is it for me? May I keep it?

PREECE. I want you to.

EMILY. Rather a strange thing for a girl to keep, isn't it? 5

PREECE. You don't mind —

EMILY. I'd part with all my jewelry before I parted with this. D'you know, it makes me feel very proud. And when I think of poor old father not knowing *anything* about it——

PREECE. I shall tell him tomorrow if he can spare time 10 to see me.

EMILY. Spare time to see *you*—why?

PREECE. Oh! you don't know, but Mr. Rhead's a sort of crowned head on the works. You can't walk into his office as if it was a public-house, I can tell you. 15

EMILY. But it's so important for him.

PREECE. Rather! Much more important for him than for me.

EMILY. Why?

PREECE. Under our agreement! Our agreement has 20 five years to run yet, and during that time everything I do belongs to the firm. I only get a percentage on whatever my inventions bring in.

EMILY. What percentage?

PREECE. Ten. For every hundred pounds profit I get 25 ten pounds and the firm gets ninety.

EMILY. But what a frightful shame! It ought to be the other way about—you ninety pounds and the firm ten.

PREECE. Oh, no! It's fair enough—really! They pay me a very good salary. And you must remember if Mr. 30 Rhead hadn't taken me out of the drawing office, I should be there now getting two pounds a week!

EMILY. I don't care! I think it's a frightful shame. I shall tell father.

PREECE [*half playfully*]. Please don't, unless you want to ruin me with him. I owe just about everything to your father.

EMILY. But it's so horridly unfair.

5 PREECE. Oh, no! I assure you. I shall have all the money I want, and more. And it will always be *my* invention. That's the point.

EMILY. Then you don't care for money?

PREECE. Yes, I do. I want enough. In fact, I want a
10 good deal. But what's interesting is to *do* things, and to do 'em better and quicker, and less clumsily than ever they were done before. If I can make nineteen tons of steel do the work of twenty—Well, I reckon I've accomplished something for the world.

15 EMILY. I like that. It's very original.

PREECE. Not my notion, you know. I'm a disciple of William Morris.

EMILY. Oh! He's a poet, isn't he?

PREECE. You should read *The Earthly Paradise*.

20 EMILY. I should love to.

PREECE. If people would read a bit more William Morris, and less of these silly gimcrack novels about lords and actresses— Ouida and so on— What's the matter?

EMILY. Nothing. [*With a certain self-satisfaction.*] Wil-
25 liam Black's silly too, isn't he?

PREECE. Of course.

EMILY [*firmly*]. I'm going to read *The Earthly Paradise*.

PREECE. Let me lend it you. I've got a signed copy, from the author.

30 EMILY. You know an author!

21. William Morris (1834-1896) was one of the leading poets and writers of the later Victorian era. He was also one of the two pioneers of English socialism, "who, in 1880, organized the Social Democratic Federation" (see Moody and Lovett, *A History of English Literature*, pages 381-385, and J. S. Schapiro, *Modern and Contemporary European History*, page 593).

PREECE. I know William Morris. I was up at his stable last night.

EMILY. His stable?

PREECE. He gives lectures in a stable behind his house at Hammersmith. I wish you'd heard him pitching into the House of Lords. "A squad of dukes."

EMILY. But why?

PREECE. Oh, because they aren't interested in the right thing.

EMILY. What is the right thing? 10

PREECE. The right thing is to make the world fit to live in.

EMILY. But isn't it?

PREECE. Have you ever been to the East End?

EMILY. I did some shunning once, just to see. But I was so ashamed to go into their awful houses that I never tried again. 15

PREECE [*getting up, excited*]. That's grand! That's grand! That's just how I feel. Everyone feels like that that's got any imagination and any sense of justice. We ought to be ashamed of the East End. At least the governing classes ought. Not for the poor, but for themselves. They ought to go and get buried if they can't govern better than that. 20

EMILY [*after a pause, rising as in thought; moved*]. But how are you going to change it? 25

PREECE. Not by shunning, that's a certainty. You can only change it by getting some decent laws passed, and by playing fair, and doing your job, and thinking a great deal less about eating and drinking, and fine clothes, and being in the swim and all that sort of nonsense. Do you 30

4. He gives lectures in a stable, etc. In 1885 the police conducted a campaign against street meetings. They "arrested a banner bearer in the midst of a socialist procession, and in the police court case which followed William Morris was fined for interference" (Gretton, *A Modern History of the English People*, Volume I, page 172).

know what I am going to do as soon as I can afford? I'm going to be a Member of Parliament.

EMILY [*low*]. Why did you offer to take us to the Hotel Métropole?

5 PREECE [*confused*]. I thought you'd like it. I—I——

EMILY. You despise it yourself.

PREECE. I'm human.

EMILY. But—— [*She draws close to him.*]

PREECE. I'm very ambitious. I want a whole lot of
10 things. But if I thought I could find someone—find a woman, who—who feels as I feel; who'd like before everything to help to make the world decent—I'd——

EMILY. I—— [*Profoundly stirred, she falls into his arms.*]

PREECE. Emily! [*He kisses her long, holding her close.*]

15 EMILY [*gently releases herself and walks away. With effort*]. I haven't told you. I forgot. Father doesn't wish me to go out with you this afternoon. He's here now, in the study. [*GERTRUDE enters from the hall, without her bonnet this time.*]

GERTRUDE. Good afternoon, Mr. Preece. [*They shake hands. To Emily.*] I suppose you—er—told Mr. Preece
20 that the excursion is countermanded? [*She goes to the fireplace.*]

EMILY. Yes, Mr. Preece was just going. [*Gently.*] Good afternoon. [*She holds out her hand to PREECE, who hesitates.*

EMILY repeats in firmer tone.] Good afternoon. [*In a tender*
25 *voice.*] Please! [*With a smile.*] Another time! [*PREECE shakes hands and, bowing to GERTRUDE, retires. As he departs GERTRUDE rings the bell by the fireplace.*]

GERTRUDE. Well, I've been catching it, I can tell you!

EMILY [*shaken*]. What about?

30 GERTRUDE. About you. They simply asked me to go into the study so that I could be talked to—for your good, my girl.

EMILY. They weren't rude, were they?

GERTRUDE. You know your mother's always most considerate. She's an angel. But your father rubbed it in finely. How many times had you seen the young man?—If ever alone?—What on earth was I thinking of?—What on earth was your mother doing to have noticed nothing? (As if your mother ever noticed anything!) And so on! Of course I told them pretty straight that they were making a most ridiculous fuss about nothing.

EMILY. Well, anyhow, I've let him kiss me.

GERTRUDE. You've let him kiss you? When? 10

EMILY. Just now. Here.

GERTRUDE. But what—

EMILY. Don't ask me. I don't know, I really don't. But I've felt it coming for some time.

GERTRUDE. Do you mean to say he walked in here and proposed to you straight off, and you accepted him? 15

EMILY. I didn't accept him, because he didn't propose. He was talking about his ideas.

GERTRUDE. What ideas?

EMILY [*with a vague gesture*]. Oh, about the world in general, and all that he means to do. He's made another marvelous invention, only no one knows except me. It was the excited way he talked—somehow—I couldn't help it—before I knew what we were doing, he'd got his arms round me. 20

GERTRUDE [*rather sternly, in spite of her tender feeling*]. Well, Emily, I must say I'm very surprised. 25

EMILY. So am I.

GERTRUDE. Of course you're engaged to him?

EMILY. Am I?

GERTRUDE. And it'll be all my fault. However, it's got to be seen through to the end now. 30

EMILY. He has very strange ideas. They sound splendid when he's explaining them. But d'you know, he thinks Ouida's silly.

GERTRUDE. Does he?

EMILY. And he really doesn't care about money and fashion and all that sort of thing. He despises going to the Hotel Métropole. He only offered to go there because he
5 thought it would please our horrid little minds—I was so ashamed.

GERTRUDE. But surely you knew all this before—at least you guessed it?

EMILY. I didn't, auntie. I never thought about his
10 ideas, never! I just ——

GERTRUDE. You just simply fell into his arms as soon as you heard them, that's all. Well, surely in that case, you must admire these ideas of his tremendously. [*She sits in an armchair.*]

15 EMILY. I don't know. Yes. I *admire* them, but ——

GERTRUDE. Listen, young woman! Are you in love with him, or aren't you?

EMILY. I — I —— How can you tell whether you're in love with a man or not?

20 GERTRUDE. Supposing you were alone with him here, now—would you let him kiss you again? [*Pause.*]

EMILY. I ——

GERTRUDE. Now, out with it!

EMILY. I shouldn't be able to stop him, should I?

25 GERTRUDE. That's enough.

EMILY. Yes. But then what about father? He would be frightfully angry, I can see that. Oh, I do hate unpleasantness, auntie. And Mr. Preece's ideas are really very peculiar.

30 GERTRUDE [*after a look at Emily*]. Listen, Emily! I was once engaged to be married.

EMILY. Oh, auntie! I always knew you must have been. Do tell me. Who was it?

GERTRUDE. Your Uncle Sam.

EMILY [*staggered*]. Not Uncle Sam?

GERTRUDE. You're surprised, naturally. But you mustn't be too hard. Remember it was twenty-five years ago; Uncle Sam was a splendid fellow then. He's old now. We're all old, except you—and Mr. Preece. You've got the only thing 5 worth having, you two.

EMILY [*sitting at GERTRUDE's feet*]. What's that?

GERTRUDE. Youth. Your Uncle Sam lived the miserable life of a bachelor till he was fifty. He'd have been a very different man if I'd married him. And I should have been a 10 very different woman.

EMILY. Why did you break it off?

GERTRUDE. I broke it off because there were difficulties; and because I thought his ideas were peculiar; and because I hated unpleasantness! And now look at me! Couldn't I 15 have ruled a house and a family? Couldn't I have played the hostess? [*In another tone.*] Today the one poor little joy I have in life is to pretend I'm your mother. Look at my position here. I'm only — —

EMILY [*passionately*]. Oh, auntie, don't! I can't bear to 20 hear you say it. I know!

GERTRUDE. We were opposite in every way, your uncle and I, but I—I loved him.

EMILY [*softly*]. Do you still love him, auntie?

GERTRUDE [*in a flat tone of despair*]. No! Love dies out. 25

EMILY [*after a moment*]. Why didn't you marry somebody else?

GERTRUDE. There *was* nobody else. There never is anybody else when you've made the mistake I made. Marry! I could have chosen among a dozen men! But they were all 30 the wrong men. Emily! Fancy pouring out tea every day of your life for the wrong man. Every breakfast time —every afternoon! And there he sits, and nothing will move him. Think of that, Emily—think of that. [*A pause.*]

EMILY [*embracing her again*]. Oh, auntie! I love you awfully!

GERTRUDE. You must show some courage, my girl. Don't be afraid of anything—and especially not of arguments and
5 threats. What does unpleasantness matter, after all? It's over in a month; but a mistake lasts forever.

EMILY. You'll help me?

GERTRUDE. That's all I live for. [*She kisses EMILY tenderly.*] Is that Sam's voice?

[THOMPSON *enters.*]

10 THOMPSON [*announcing*]. Mr. and Mrs. Sibley. [*He retires.*]

[SAMUEL SIBLEY and his wife NANCY enter. SAMUEL, who is now fifty-three, has grown into a rather flabby nonentity, grey-haired with longish side-whiskers and glasses. His manner is important and fussy. NANCY is a buxom, Yorkshire woman of thirty-two, round-faced, good-natured, full of energy. She wears the fashionable jersey of 1885 and a very definite "bustle."]

SAM. Well, Gertrude? Well, my little Emmie! [*He kisses Emily, who gives her cheek unwillingly; then shakes hands with Gertrude.*]

15 GERTRUDE. How are you, Sam; and you, Mrs. Sam?

NANCY. Nicely, thank you! [*Shaking hands vigorously with GERTRUDE and EMILY.*] Everybody well, here?

EMILY. Yes, thank you.

NANCY. That's fine! Then your mother got Sam's letter
20 saying we were coming?

EMILY [*dryly*]. Oh, yes!

NANCY. I said to Sam it would happen be best to write and tell you. So he wrote—[*with a look at SAM*]*—finally.*

SAM [*with a serious tone*]. We nearly didn't come.

GERTRUDE. Anything wrong?

SAM. Infant's temperature up at a hundred last night. However, it was normal this morning.

NANCY. You know he takes the baby's temperature every night.

5

EMILY. Oh, do you, uncle? How funny!

SAM. I don't see anything funny about it, niece. Good thing if some parents took their responsibilities a bit more seriously.

NANCY. I must say Sam makes a very good father.

10

GERTRUDE. Let me see—how old is Dickie now?

SAM. We never call him Dickie—Richard, better; less nonsensical. [*He settles down solemnly in a chair.*]

NANCY. You've no idea what I call him when you're not there, Sam! [*To Gertrude.*] He was two on the second of this month. He talks like anything! You ought to see him and his father together. It's killing! The little thing's so exactly like Sam.

15

EMILY [*examining SAM*]. Is he? We must go down to Brockley, mustn't we, auntie?

20

NANCY [*dryly*]. I've been expecting you for the better part of some time. [*Then cordially.*] I should love you to come as soon as I've got a new cook. [*With emphasis.*] Oh, my!

GERTRUDE. Are you having trouble?

NANCY. Trouble's not the word. And as for the nurse-maid! If it wasn't for Sam being free ——

25

GERTRUDE. D'you take your share, Sam?

NANCY. By the hour he wheels that child up and down.

EMILY. Not in the street?

SAM. Why not, niece? Anything to be ashamed of in being a father?

30

NANCY. That's what we came up for today, to buy a new perambulator. He did try to repair the other in the little workshop he's made himself at the end of the garden —

and most useful he is for odd jobs. Upon my word, he's busy from morning to night! But we thought it better to buy a new pram altogether.

SAM [*discontented*]. Nancy would insist on having one
5 of those new things with india-rubber tires, as they call them.

NANCY [*very definitely*]. Now, Sam, I thought we'd done with that question.

SAM. Yes; but rubber tires on gravel paths! It's obvious they'll not last a——

10 NANCY. I told you Mrs. Caton across the road told me——

SAM. Oh, very well! Very well! Only it's very light and flimsy.

EMILY [*restless*]. I think I'll go and tell father and mother you're here. [*Going toward the door.*]

15 NANCY [*rising, very convinced*]. Come and see for yourself what you think of the pram and the rubber tires.

EMILY [*rising*]. Is it here?

NANCY. Yes, in the hall.

SAM. I deemed it imprudent to let them send it down
20 by train. So we brought it away on the roof of a four-wheeler.

EMILY [*patronizingly*]. Well, let's go and inspect it, Aunt Nancy. [*EMILY and NANCY go off.*]

GERTRUDE [*waiting till the door is closed; in low, quiet*
25 *tones*]. Sam, I'm so glad you've come. There's going to be another tragedy in this house, if some of us don't do something.

SAM. Another tragedy? What do you mean?

GERTRUDE. I just mean a tragedy. That child's head
30 over heels in love with young Arthur Preece, at the works, and John simply won't hear of it.

SAM. Why?

GERTRUDE [*shrugs her shoulders*]. Why, indeed? Sam,

3. *pram*, short for perambulator, baby-carriage.

if there's any discussion while you're here I want you to help me all you can.

SAM. But really, Gertrude, how can I meddle in an affair like that? I have my own responsibilities.

GERTRUDE. Sam, it's many years since I asked the slightest favor of you.

SAM [*moved, friendly*]. Come, come. Don't go so far back as all that. We're all very comfortable as we are, I think. [*The door opens.*]

GERTRUDE [*quick and low*]. But will you? You've got 10 more influence than I have.

SAM [*low*]. All right. [*Pats her arm.*] All right.

[*Enter ROSE and JOHN.*]

JOHN [*coming up to Sam a little patronizingly*]. Sam, glad to see you! How's the precious family getting on? Any new trouble lately? 15

SAM [*a little sharply*]. Oh, no! And what about yours? [*In a significant, bantering tone.*] Any new trouble lately?

JOHN. Mine? Trouble? No!

ROSE [*kissing SAM fondly*]. Your wife's here?

SAM. She's downstairs somewhere—— 20

JOHN [*interrupting sharply*]. Where's Emily?

GERTRUDE. She's just gone with Mrs. Sam to look at a new——

JOHN [*interrupting again*]. Preece hasn't been, has he?

GERTRUDE. He's been and gone. 25

JOHN. Were you here?

GERTRUDE. I was here part of the time.

JOHN. You ought to have been here all the time. What did you tell him?

GERTRUDE. Emily told him you wished us to stay at home this afternoon. 30

JOHN [*nodding curtly*]. So much for that.

SAM. So even *you* are not quite without 'em, Jack?

JOHN. Not quite without what?

SAM. Family troubles.

JOHN. What in heaven's name are you driving at?

5 SAM. Nothing. I only gathered from your tone that Preece was considered—er—dangerous.

JOHN [*hedging*]. Oh, no! I'm merely taking precautions. Preece is an excellent fellow in his way—brilliant even.

SAM. But you wouldn't care for him as a son-in-law.

10 JOHN [*positively*]. I should not.

ROSE [*shaking her head*]. No!

SAM. I've always understood he had a great career before him.

JOHN. So he has, undoubtedly. You should see what
15 he's got me to do at the works. Made me install the telephone. And his latest is that he wants me to put down an electric light plant. What do you think of that?

SAM. He must be very enthusiastic.

GERTRUDE. I should think he just is!

20 JOHN. Why, the boy's invention mad. He thinks of nothing else.

SAM. Well, if you ask me I'd sooner have that kind of madness than most kinds I meet with. Seems to me people have gone mad on bicycles or banjo-playing or this lawn
25 tennis, as it's called. It was different in our day, Jack, when young men took an interest in volunteering and the defense of their country. I've quite decided when our boy grows up——

GERTRUDE [*putting a hand on Sam's arm*]. Sam!—Emily
30 may be back any moment. We were talking about Arthur Preece.

SAM. So we were. [*Turns again to JOHN.*] Well, Jack——

JOHN [*annoyed*]. Look here, Sam—I don't mind being

frank with you. Her mother and I have somebody else in view for Emily.

SAM. Oh!

GERTRUDE [*bitterly*]. I thought as much. [*A slight pause.*]

*JOHN [*carelessly to SAM*]. Have you heard I'm going to 5
have a title?

SAM. No! What title?

JOHN. Baronet.

GERTRUDE [*quickly*]. You never told me.

ROSE [*soothingly*]. It only came out this afternoon, 10
Gertrude dear.

SAM. Oh—ho.

JOHN [*still with an affectation of carelessness*]. And what's more, Emily can marry—under the very happiest auspices—into the peerage. That's why we don't want her to see 15
too much of young Preece.

SAM. And may one ask who is the Peer?

JOHN. Monkhurst, of course.

SAM. Ned!

GERTRUDE. Ned?

20

ROSE. Wouldn't it be ideal, Sam!

SAM. He's keen—Ned?

JOHN. Very! Put that in your pipe and smoke it, my boy.

[EMILY and NANCY reënter rather suddenly. All the others have a self-conscious air.]

JOHN [*rather negligently*]. Well, Nancy. How are you? 25
It seems the infant's grown out of his pram. [*Shakes hands.*]

NANCY [*rather proud of being able to call the great man "John" and yet trying not to be proud*]. Glad to see you, John. [ROSE and NANCY embrace. An awkward pause.]

EMILY [*with suspicion*]. What's the matter here? More 30
secrets?

GERTRUDE [*in an outburst*]. It's being arranged that you are to marry Lord Monkhurst.

JOHN [*nonplussed, coldly angry*]. Gertrude, are you stark, staring mad—blurting things out like that?

5 ROSE [*shocked*]. Gertrude, dear—really!

GERTRUDE [*firmly*]. She'd better know, hadn't she?

JOHN. You——

NANCY [*blandly*]. Well, anyhow, the fat's in the fire now, isn't it, John?

10 JOHN [*turning to Nancy*]. Sorry you've been let in for a bit of a scene, Nancy.

NANCY [*cheerfully*]. Oh! Don't mind me. I know what family life is—my word! I'm from Yorkshire! Best to have it out fair and square—that's my experience.

15 SAM. That's what she always says when the infant's obstreperous. Why, the night before last, just as we were getting off to sleep——

JOHN. There's nothing to have out!

GERTRUDE. Oh, yes, there is. Emily's in love with
20 Arthur Preece.

JOHN. What's this?

EMILY [*very nervous; to GERTRUDE*]. What do you mean—it's being arranged for me to marry Lord Monkhurst? Me—marry old Ned!

25 JOHN. He's not old.

EMILY. Isn't he old enough to be my father?

JOHN. Certainly not.

SAM [*mischievously*]. I doubt it.

JOHN [*turning on him*]. You're the last man to talk
30 about difference of age between husband and wife.

ROSE [*smoothing over the awkwardness*]. But you're very happy, aren't you, dear?

SAM. Naturally.

NANCY. I don't see that age matters—so long as people

really fancy each other. I'm sure Sam gets younger every day.

JOHN. Of course! [*Turning to EMILY angrily.*] What's this tale about you being in love with Preece?

EMILY. I——

5

JOHN. Has he been proposing to you?

EMILY. No.

JOHN [*disdainfully*]. Then how can you be in love with him?

EMILY [*resenting his tone*]. Well, I *am* in love with him, if 10
you want to know, father.

JOHN. You have the audacity——

NANCY. Come, John, it's not a crime.

JOHN. Preece is not of our class at all. It's a gross
mistake to marry out of your class. 15

NANCY [*banteringly*]. Now, John, that's not very tact-
ful, seeing that Sam married out of *his* class.

SAM. Don't be foolish, Nan! I married a lady. Even
a marquis couldn't do more.

JOHN. My dear Nancy, you belong to the family— 20
that's enough! Preece is quite a different affair. Just a
common clerk until I——

EMILY. I can't see what more you want. He has the
most beautiful manners, and, as for money, he'll make
lots. 25

JOHN. How will he make lots?

EMILY. With his inventions. You haven't heard about
his latest. But I have. He's told me. Here it is. [*Hands
piece of steel to her father.*]

JOHN [*taking it*]. And what's this? 30

EMILY. I don't know exactly. But it's very wonderful.
It's steel, I think—a new kind.

JOHN [*dryly*]. Yes. I see it's steel.

EMILY. And I think it's a great shame for you to take

nine-tenths of all the money from his inventions, and for *him* to only have one-tenth.

JOHN [*flashing up*]. What? Has he been whining to you in that style?

5 EMILY [*passionately*]. No, he hasn't been whining to me in that style. He hasn't been whining at all. He thought it was quite fair. It only came out by pure accident, and I promised I'd never breathe a word. You must forget what I've said.

10 JOHN. I'll teach him——

EMILY [*more passionately*]. If you ever say a single thing, father, I'll run away and never come back.

ROSE. Child! please! [*She tries to soothe her.*]

SAM [*to calm the stress*]. Hand over, Jack. [*Takes the*
15 *piece of steel and looks at it.*] I fully admit I was wrong about iron. But even *you* won't prophesy that steel's going to take the place of iron for ships!

JOHN [*shortly*]. I don't think it is in *my* works. But, as for prophesying—I don't prophesy. Heaven knows no
20 one can accuse me of being conservative in my ideas. But I must say the new generation seems to be going clean off its head. If one of these up-to-date inventors came along and told me he'd made a flying-machine, I should keep my nerve. I shouldn't blench.

25 SAM. Good! Good!

GERTRUDE. Now you're at flying-machines! What have flying-machines got to do with Emily's happiness? If she wants to marry young Preece——

EMILY. Yes, if I want to marry him, why shouldn't I?

30 ROSE. Because your father objects.

EMILY. Oh, mother. Didn't you marry father, in spite of everyone?

JOHN. Who's told you that?

EMILY. I know. [*General glances at GERTRUDE.*]

ROSE [*indignant*]. Do you mean to compare young Preece with your father?

EMILY. Why not? You loved father, and I——

JOHN. I'll tell you why not. I was independent. I was my own master. Young Mr. Preece isn't. That's 5 why.

GERTRUDE [*sarcastically*]. Surely it's a free country—for men!

JOHN. It's not a country where honest men break their contracts. Young Preece can't patent an invention without 10 me. Can't do anything without me. If I like, I can force him to mark time for five years, five solid years.

EMILY. Does that mean that if I married him in spite of you——

ROSE [*horrified*]. Child! Well may you say we've spoiled 15 you!

JOHN [*calmly*]. It means that if he had the impudence to marry you, I'd scotch him—that I would.

EMILY. But why? Who's going to suffer? How can my marriage affect anybody but me? 20

JOHN. Don't talk like a little fool. Your marriage is the most important thing in the whole world to your mother and me. And if you persist in doing something against our will, I shall retaliate—that's all.

EMILY [*with a despairing gesture*]. I can't make out 25 your objections to Mr. Preece. Why, he's a genius; everyone *knows* he's a genius.

JOHN. And what if he is? Are geniuses to be the kings of the earth? Not quite! Geniuses have to be kept in order like criminals. If there's one thing above all to be 30 said in favor of the English character, it is that we've known the proper way to treat geniuses.

SAM. I'm inclined to agree with you there.

JOHN [*to EMILY*]. Oh, it isn't Preece's class I object to.

He's presentable enough. The whole truth is he's a highly dangerous sort of young man we're breeding in these days. He—he makes you feel—uncomfortable. On the works, under discipline, admirable. Outside the works—no, no! 5 And no! I've been following Master Preece's activities far more closely than he thinks. He little guesses I know he's a Socialist!

SAM. A Socialist! Good God! Gertrude, you never told me that. A Socialist!

10 GERTRUDE. Why are men always so frightened by names?

JOHN. A Socialist. [*To EMILY, an ultimatum.*] And I don't intend you to marry him. If you do, you ruin him. That's the long and short of it. Now, Emily, have we heard the last of Preece—or not?

15 ROSE [*to EMILY*]. Darling!

GERTRUDE. I really think you ought——

JOHN [*curtly*]. Pardon me, Gertrude. This isn't your affair. It's my daughter's.

GERTRUDE [*to EMILY*]. Your father is right. It's your 20 affair. It depends solely on you.

EMILY [*weeping imploringly*]. What am I to do, auntie? [*GERTRUDE turns away with a movement of pain and disgust.*]

EMILY. I don't want to make everybody miserable.

GERTRUDE [*reproachfully*]. Oh, Emily!

EMILY. I couldn't stand—in Mr. Preece's light! I 25 couldn't.

JOHN. There! There! Of course you couldn't.

ROSE [*comforting her*]. My poor lamb!

JOHN. And don't go and suppose I want to compel you to marry Monkhurst—or anybody. You're absolutely free.

30 GERTRUDE [*sniffs audibly*]. H'm!

JOHN [*glaring at GERTRUDE, to EMILY*]. Only, as your aunt *has* dragged in his name, I don't see any harm in telling you this much. He adores you. We all like him. His wife

will have a position second to none in London society. But don't let that influence you. Take him or refuse him as you please; your mother and I won't complain.

ROSE. Indeed we shan't, my love.

JOHN. Still a marriage like this is not to be sneezed at. 5
Is it, Emily? [*Pause.*] I say, is it?

EMILY [*trying to smile; weakly*]. No.

JOHN [*continuing*]. Not that I think it wouldn't be a big slice of luck for Monkhurst, too! There's only one Emily! 10
[*He pats her.*] And then my title——

NANCY. Your title, John?

JOHN [*carelessly*]. Haven't you heard?

NANCY. No!

JOHN [*as above*]. Baronetcy!

NANCY [*staggered*]. Wonders 'll never cease. [*To ROSE.*] 15
What a pity you've got no son, dear!

ROSE [*with a trace of bitterness*]. Don't crow over us, dear!
[*She clasps EMILY to her.*]

SAM [*with a sigh of regret for himself*]. Well, well! And 20
I've retired into private life!

JOHN [*surveying him patronizingly*]. And you've retired into private life. You're safe at Brockley. But then you see you hadn't got a bee in your bonnet.

SAM [*accepting the sarcasm with a foolish smile*]. Well, 25
well!

NANCY [*sharply*]. I don't see that there's any need for so much well-welling.

JOHN. Come and give your father a kiss, Em. [EMILY obeys.]

GERTRUDE [*rising as she does so, full of emotion*]. I—— 30

[*Thompson enters followed by a footman. They bring in tea.*]

GERTRUDE pulls herself together. There is a slight pause while the servants arrange the tea things. They leave the room.]

ROSE. Emily, dear, will you pour out?

EMILY [*demurely*]. Yes, mother.

ROSE. I hope Ned won't be late.

NANCY. Is Lord Monkhurst coming for tea?

5 ROSE. He promised to.

NANCY. Oh, dear! If I'd known I was going to meet him—— [*She rises and arranges her bustle and the draperies of her skirt.*] I do hope he won't notice that pram. A pram in a hall looks so common. [*She reseats herself.* THOMP-

10 SON *enters.*]

THOMPSON [*announcing*]. Lord Monkhurst! [*He retires.*]

GERTRUDE [*passionately*]. Here's your lord! [*NED enters rapidly.*]

NED. Well, kind friends. Hullo, Sam!

15 SAM. Hullo, Ned! [*They shake hands.*] By the way, my wife—Nancy, Lord Monkhurst. [*NANCY, flustered, bows.*]

NED [*going toward EMILY*]. Delighted! Any of that tea for me?

20 GERTRUDE [*with great feeling*]. And there's your tea—your daily tea, for the rest of your life.

JOHN [*angrily*]. Gertrude!

GERTRUDE. No, I will speak! Ned, what would you do, if I told you that——

25 EMILY [*pleading*]. Aunt Gertrude, please——

GERTRUDE. Emily?

EMILY [*weakly*]. It's all right, auntie.

GERTRUDE. All right? Oh, very well! [*Desperately.*] What's the use! [*She turns and walks quickly out of the*
30 *room.*]

NED [*surprised at GERTRUDE'S tone*]. What's the matter with dear Gertrude?

JOHN. Nothing. One of her moods. [*Drawing up a chair, with authority.*] Now then, Emily—tea!

CURTAIN

CLASSROOM WORK

I. QUESTIONS

1. Study costuming and staging.
2. What is accomplished for the audience through the opening conversation of John, Rose, and Ned?
3. By way of summary of Act II compare with Act I as to parallel situations and interests and as to additional material.
4. Compare this act with Act II of *Caste* from the point of view of grouping of characters, centralized situation, climax, and theatrically effective scenes.
5. What allusions and remarks tend to create the atmosphere of 1885?
6. What is the significance of Preece's comments on William Morris's lectures, slumming in the East End, and going to Parliament (pages 164-166)?
7. Why are Sam and John so disturbed over the fact that Preece is a socialist?
8. What is the significance of the closing words of Act II?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Emily and her mother—a compromise.
2. John—is he consistent in Act II as compared with Act I?
3. Preece the progressive.
4. Changes in recreation between 1885 and today as suggested by Sam's remarks on bicycles, banjo-playing, and lawn tennis (page 174).
5. JOHN (page 179): "Geniuses have to be kept in order like criminals. If there's one thing above all to be said in favor of the English character, it is that we've known the proper way to treat geniuses."

ACT III

1912

The same drawing-room, but now, in 1912, it has undergone an entire change. All of the old mid-Victorian furniture has been crowded out by furniture of later style. Changes of ornaments, etc. The lights are electric; so is the bell by the fireplace.

It is a June evening, about half-past ten at night. Signs of festivity—flowers, presents [in gold] are standing about. It is the evening of the golden wedding of John and Rose. [WEBSTER, a smart, military-looking butler of forty, is arranging a tray of whisky and soda. The door to the hall opens, and a footman enters.]

FOOTMAN [announcing]. Lord Monkhurst. [He withdraws.]

[Lord Monkhurst enters. He is a young man about town of twenty-two, tall, hollow-chested, careless in his manners. very self-assured and properly bored.]

MONKHURST. I say, Webster.

WEBSTER. Good evening, my lord.

5 MONKHURST [cheerfully]. I suppose dinner's over?

WEBSTER [looking at his watch]. It's half-past ten, my lord.

MONKHURST. Of course, they'll all say I'm late for dinner.

10 WEBSTER. Oh, no, my lord. Shall I order some dinner for your lordship?

MONKHURST. No. Who's here now?

WEBSTER. Lady Monkhurst and Miss Muriel; Miss Rhead, Mrs. Samuel Sibley, and Mr. Richard Sibley.

15 MONKHURST. Yes. I know *he's* here. Many people at the reception this afternoon?

WEBSTER. Drove, my lord.

MONKHURST. I suppose these ghastly things are the presents?

WEBSTER. As your lordship says.

MONKHURST. Dashed if I can understand why my grandfather should make such a fuss about his golden 5 wedding. [*Very cheerfully.*] Was he very angry at me not turning up?

WEBSTER. Considering his age, no, my lord. I took the liberty of suggesting to him that this might be one of your busy weeks, my lord, and that your lordship could never 10 tell beforehand——

MONKHURST. You're a clever chap, Webster. Why the devil did you leave the army?

WEBSTER. Probably because, as your lordship says, I'm clever. There's more brains outside the army than in it, 15 my lord. And like turns to like.

MONKHURST [*laughing in a superior way*]. Ha! ha! Really!

WEBSTER. Fact is, I enlisted under a misapprehension, when I was in a temper. I have to thank your lordship's 20 late father for helping me to reënter my old profession, and under the most auspicious circumstances.

MONKHURST. Well, we could do with more fellahs like you. I've not yet found any serjeant to draw my sketch maps for me half as well as you used to. [*He is looking over 25 the tray with drinks.*]

WEBSTER. Ah, my lord! Those half-guineas came in very handy, very handy. Glorious times, no doubt. But I wouldn't go back.

MONKHURST. Bring me a benedictine, will you?

30

[EMILY, now LADY MONKHURST, forty-eight, enters by the double doors. She has developed into a handsome, well-

30. benedictine, a French liquor, so called because it is said to have been made originally by the Benedictine monks.

preserved woman of the world. She wears an evening dress of rich brocade, and magnificent pearls.]

MONKHURST. Well, mater, I don't see much sign of the fattened calf.

EMILY [*annoyed*]. Gerald, your poor father was witty; you are merely facetious. I wish you could cure yourself.

5 MONKHURST. Now, what's the matter now?

EMILY. What's the matter? You must needs choose your grandparents' golden wedding to go to Sandown. You promised me you'd be back early, at any rate in time for the tail end of the reception; and you don't even appear for dinner. Your grandfather is very displeased.

MONKHURST. If a fellow keeps a stable, he keeps a stable. Somebody's got to look after the gees in these days. And then—— [*Hesitates.*]

EMILY. Please don't tell me your car broke down. I've
15 heard that too often.

MONKHURST. It didn't—this time.

EMILY. Have you dined?

MONKHURST. I have.

EMILY. Whom with? [*Silence.*] One of your numerous
20 "lady friends," I presume. Gerald, I'm ashamed of you.

MONKHURST. You've no right to be ashamed of me. If you want to know, I dined at the House of Lords.

EMILY. At the House of Lords?

MONKHURST. At the House of Lords. They telephoned
25 to me at Sandown to come up for an important division, and I was kept hanging about there till after ten o'clock. Jolly amusing place, the House of Lords.

EMILY [*rather taken aback*]. Why didn't you tell me at first?

30 MONKHURST. Because I just wanted to teach you a les-

12. *gees*, an English colloquial expression meaning *horses*. See *New English Dictionary*.

son, mater. You're always ragging me about something or other.

EMILY. You might at least have telephoned.

MONKHURST. When a chap's doing his duty to his country, he can't always think about telephoning. 5

EMILY. My dear Gerald, if you mean to follow in your father's footsteps, nobody will be more delighted than your mother. There'd be nothing to prevent you from being Master of the Horse, if you chose. Only, my chick——

MONKHURST. Only what? 10

EMILY. You must alter your manner of living.

MONKHURST. My manner of living, my dear mater, is my own affair. [*With meaning.*] If you'd leave me alone, and look after your other "chick" a little bit more——

EMILY. What do you mean? Muriel? 15

MONKHURST. Precisely. The Honorable Muriel.

EMILY. Why?

MONKHURST. Oh! I know Muriel can do no wrong. Still, I spotted her at the top of the stairs just now practically in the arms of the good Richard. 20

EMILY. Richard!

MONKHURST [*intoning*]. And Samuel took to wife Nancy, and begat Richard. And Samuel passed away in the fullness of years and his son Richard reigned in his stead. And Richard looked upon Muriel, and lo! she was beautiful in 25 the eyes of Richard——

EMILY. Hush, Gerald! Aren't you mistaken? I've never seen the slightest thing——

MONKHURST. That shows how blind you are, then! Of course I'm not mistaken. 30

EMILY. Are you sure?

MONKHURST. Do you take me for a fool, mater?

9 *Master of the Horse*. "An important official in the sovereign's household" (see *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Volume XVII. page 872).

EMILY [*positively*]. Richard, indeed! I shall put a stop to it.

MONKHURST [*almost savagely*]. I should jolly well think you would.

[*Enter WEBSTER from the hall with a liqueur on a salver. MONKHURST takes it and drinks it slowly.*]

2 EMILY. Webster, will you kindly ask Miss Muriel to come here?

WEBSTER. Very good, my lady. [*He goes out.*]

[*MONKHURST nods knowingly to his mother as if to say, "Now, you'll see!" Nancy enters by the double doors. She has grown into a rather red-faced, plump old woman of fifty-eight. She is good-natured, but is quick to retort. Her laugh is rather loud, her manner more definite than ever.*]

NANCY. Good evening, young man.

MONKHURST. Good evening.

10 NANCY. So you've come at——

EMILY [*interrupting her*]. Aunt Nancy, I've just had to send for Muriel to come here.

NANCY. What's amiss?

EMILY. I—well—I hardly like——

15 MONKHURST. Your excellent son Richard has been seen trying to kiss my sister.

NANCY. What was *she* doing?

EMILY. Well, that's not the point.

NANCY. And supposing he *was* trying to kiss Muriel?

20 EMILY. I must say, Aunt Nancy, you don't seem very surprised.

NANCY. Who *would* be? You invite young people to a golden wedding, and then you're startled when you catch 'em kissing. What else do you expect?

25 EMILY. I expect a good deal else.

NANCY. Then you're likely to be disappointed. As a

matter of fact, I knew Richard was going to kiss Muriel tonight.

EMILY. Who told you?

NANCY. *He* did, of course. At least, he let out to me he was going to propose to her. He usually gets what he 5 wants, you know.

EMILY [*angrily surprised*]. H'm!

MONKHURST [*very definitely*]. He won't get what he wants this time.

NANCY. Oh?

10

MONKHURST. You must see that my sister can't marry an engineer.

NANCY. Well—why not an engineer? What are *you*? I can tell you what you might have been, if you hadn't been born in the right bedroom: you might have been a 15 billiard-marker. What have you done? Tell me a single thing you've done.

MONKHURST. I've—oh! What tripe!

EMILY. Really, Aunt Nancy——

NANCY. Yes, my son *is* an engineer. And if you want 20 to know what sort of engineer he is, go to Mr. Arthur Preece.

MONKHURST [*disdainfully*]. Who's Preece?

NANCY [*imitating his tone*]. Ask your mother who *Preece* 25 is.

EMILY [*self-consciously*]. Aunt Nancy!

NANCY [*continuing*]. You aren't old enough to remember Mr. Preece as an engineer, but, at any rate, you know he's in the House of Commons, whereas you're only in the House of Lords. And I'd like you to tell me where your grand- 30 father'd have been last week with all his workmen on strike—but for Mr. Preece!

MONKHURST. Oh, *that* Preece!

18. *tripe*, an epithet expressing contempt. It goes back to the Elizabethan period (see *New English Dictionary*).

NANCY. Exactly. And it's that Preece that thinks the world of my son. My son's been out to Canada, and look how he got on in Winnipeg! And now he's going out again, whose capital is he taking but your grandfather's? I should
5 like to see your grandfather trust *you* with thirty thousand pounds and a ticket to Canada.

MONKHURST. I'm in no need of capital, thank you.

NANCY. Lucky for you you aren't! My husband left me very badly off, poor man, but I could count on Richard.
10 A pretty lookout for your mother if she'd had to count on you!

EMILY [*impatient*]. Really, Aunt Nancy——

NANCY [*nettled*]. Well, you leave my son alone.

[*Enter from the hall MURIEL and RICHARD. MURIEL is a handsome girl of twenty-four, rather thin and eager, with a high forehead, and with much distinction. . She has herself under absolute control. RICHARD is a tall, broad, darkish fellow of twenty-seven, with a clean-shaven, heavy face and rough hair. He is very taciturn.*]

EMILY. Muriel, it was you that I asked for.

15 MURIEL [*quite calmly*]. We were both just coming to tell you.

EMILY. Tell me what?

MURIEL. We're engaged.

EMILY. Does Richard leave you to say this to me?

20 MURIEL. Well, you know he was never a great talker.

RICHARD. There it is—we're engaged.

NANCY [*to MURIEL*]. How matter-of-fact you are, you girls, nowadays. [*She caresses RICHARD.*]

MURIEL. Well, nobody seems strikingly enthusiastic here.

25 EMILY. I should think not. I don't like these underhand ways.

MURIEL. What underhand ways? Surely you didn't

expect Richard to announce in advance the exact place and hour he was going to propose to me.

EMILY. Please don't try to imitate your dear father. You're worse than Gerald sometimes.

MURIEL. Oh, very well, mamma! What else? 5

EMILY. Do you mean to tell me you're seriously thinking of going out to Canada—to Winnipeg—for the rest of your days?

MURIEL. Of course, mamma! I'm sure I shall be happier there than here. 13

EMILY. You'll leave England?

MURIEL. Certainly. Politics are much more satisfactory over there, except for woman's suffrage. All the questions that all the silly statesmen are still wrangling about here have been settled over there ages ago. 15

EMILY. My poor girl!

MURIEL. Mamma, I wish you wouldn't say "my poor girl."

EMILY. What have politics to do with happiness?

MURIEL. They have a great deal to do with mine. But, 20 of course, what most attracts me is all those thousands of square miles of wheat fields, and Richard making reaping-machines for them. The day I first see one of Richard's new machines at work on a Canadian wheat farm will be the happiest day of my life—except today. 25

NANCY [*amazed at these sentiments*]. Well, you're a caution.

MONKHURST [*with disgust*]. Why not marry an agricultural implement while you're about it?

RICHARD [*threateningly*]. You shut up!

MURIEL. But aren't you glad, mamma? 30

13. *woman's suffrage*. The question of woman's suffrage was of immediate interest in England as well as in this country during the years preceding the War. They marked a period of intense militancy there on the part of suffragists struggling to secure franchise for women (see *Encyclopædia Britannica*, New Volume III [1922], pages 1034 ff.).

EMILY. I can't discuss the matter now.

MURIEL. But what is there to discuss?

EMILY [*after a pause*]. Muriel, I tell you at once, both of you, I shan't allow this marriage.

5 MURIEL. Not allow it? My poor mamma!

MONKHURST. Certainly not.

RICHARD. I've told you to shut up once.

EMILY. And your grandfather won't allow it, either.

MURIEL. Of course, mamma, you and I have always
10 been devoted to each other. You've made allowances for me, and I've made allowances for you. But you must please remember that we're in the year 1912. I've promised to marry Richard, and I shall marry him. There's no question of being "allowed." And if it comes to that, why
15 shouldn't I marry him, indeed?

EMILY. You—your father's daughter, to think of going out to Winnipeg as the wife of a—your place is in London.

RICHARD [*stiffening at the sight of trouble*]. But I say, Cousin Emily—

20 MURIEL [*gently, but firmly*]. Richard—please. [*Turning to her mother.*] Mamma, you really do shock me. Just because I'm the Honorable Muriel Pym! [*Laughs.*] I won't say you're a snob, because everybody's a snob, in some way or other. But you don't understand the new spirit, not in
25 the least—and I'm so sorry. Why! Hasn't it occurred to you even yet that the aristocracy racket's played out?

[*ROSE and JOHN enter by the double doors. They have both grown very old, ROSE being seventy-three and JOHN seventy-seven. ROSE has become short-sighted, white-haired, and stoutish. JOHN has grown a little deaf; his hair is thin, his eyes sunken, his complexion of wax, his features sharply defined. GERTRUDE follows them, now seventy-three. She has grown into a thin, shriveled old woman, erect, hard, with a high, shrill voice and keen, clear eyes.*]

ROSE. Oh! It's here they seem to be collected. [*To MONKHURST.*] Is that you, Gerald? Wherever has the poor lamb been? [*She kisses him.*]

MONKHURST. Grandma, congratulations. [*To JOHN.*] Congratulations, sir. 5

JOHN [*sternly*]. Is this what you call good manners, boy?

MONKHURST. Sorry, sir. I was kept.

JOHN [*sarcastically*]. Kept?

MONKHURST. At the House of Lords. A division.

MURIEL. Good Heavens! Break it to us gently. Has 10
his grandma's lamb gone into politics?

MONKHURST [*haughtily, ignoring his sister*]. They telephoned me from headquarters. I thought you would prefer me——

JOHN. Certainly, my boy. [*Shakes his hand.*] You 15
couldn't have celebrated our golden wedding in a fashion more agreeable to us than by recording your first vote in the House of Lords. Could he, granny?

ROSE [*feebly*]. Bless us! Bless us!

JOHN. What was the division? 20

MONKHURST [*mumbling*]. Er—the Trades Union Bill, sir. Third reading.

JOHN [*not hearing*]. What did you say?

MONKHURST [*louder*]. Trades Union Bill, sir.

MURIEL. Oh, my poor lamb! The Trades Union Bill 25
division isn't to be taken till tomorrow!

MONKHURST [*hastily*]. What am I thinking of? It must have been the Extended Franchise Bill, then. . . . Anyhow, I voted.

21. *the Trades Union Bill*. The years preceding the War, as is true of the present, were a period of great industrial unrest. (For a discussion of Trade Union legislation at that time, see *Encyclopædia Britannica*, New Volume III [1922], pages 746-747.)

28. *the Extended Franchise Bill*. This apparently refers to some other bill than one for granting voting privileges to women (see *Encyclopædia Britannica*, New Volume III [1922], page 1036).

JOHN [*coughing*]. 'H'm! H'm!

GERTRUDE [*drawing a shawl round her shoulders, fretfully*].
Couldn't we have that window closed?

ROSE. Auntie Gertrude, how brave you are! I daren't
5 have asked. I declare I'm a martyr to this ventilation in
my old age.

GERTRUDE. I daresay I'm very old-fashioned, but when
I was young we didn't try to turn a drawing-room into a
park.

10 ROSE [*to RICHARD, as he closes the window*]. Thank you,
Richard.

JOHN [*pettishly*]. Put a match to the fire, boy, and have
done with it. [RICHARD goes to the fireplace, kneels down,
and lights the fire.]

15 GERTRUDE. What's the matter, Emily?

EMILY [*who has begun to weep*]. Oh, Auntie Gertrude!

NANCY [*soothingly*]. Come, come, Emily.

JOHN. What's that? What's that?

ROSE [*peering at EMILY*]. What is it, John?

20 JOHN. Monkhurst, have you been upsetting your mother
again?

MURIEL. I think it's *us*, grandpapa.

JOHN. What does she say?

MURIEL. I'm afraid it's *us*—Richard and me. We're
25 engaged to be married. [MURIEL points to RICHARD, who
is still on his knees busy with the fire.]

ROSE. Oh, my dear—how sudden! What a shock!
What a shock! I can understand your mother crying. I
must cry myself. Come and kiss me! It's astonishing how
30 quietly you young people manage these things nowadays.
[Embraces MURIEL.]

JOHN. Who's engaged to be married? Who's engaged
to be married?

RICHARD [*loudly, rising and dusting his hands*]. Muriel
35 and I, sir.

JOHN. Mu—Mu —! What the devil do you mean, sir? Emily, what in God's name are you thinking of?

EMILY [*whimpering*]. It's just as much of a surprise to me as to anybody. I don't approve of it.

MONKHURST. I've told them already you would never 5 approve, sir.

NANCY. You haven't, young man. It was your mother who told us that.

JOHN [*to NANCY*]. I asked you to my golden wedding, Nancy—— 10

NANCY. You did, Sir John. I shouldn't have come without.

JOHN. Do you countenance this—affair?

NANCY. What's wrong with it?

ROSE [*timidly*]. Yes, John. What's wrong with it? 15 Why shouldn't my Muriel marry her Richard?

JOHN. What's wrong with it, d'you say? What——!

EMILY [*passionately*]. I won't agree to it.

JOHN [*to NANCY*]. Nothing wrong with it, from your point of view. Nothing! [*Laughing.*] Only I shan't have 20 it. I won't have it.

ROSE. Grandpa, why do you always try to cross me?

JOHN. I? You?

ROSE. I've been yielding to you in everything for fifty years. I think I'm old enough to have my own way now— 25 just once.

JOHN [*startled*]. What's come over you?

ROSE. Nothing's come over me. But I really——

JOHN [*subduing her*]. Be silent, granny!

NANCY. We thought you thought very highly of Richard. 30

JOHN. So I do. But what's that got to do with it? It's . nothing but this genius business over again.

NANCY. Genius business?

JOHN. Yes. I shall be told Richard's a genius, therefore

he must be allowed to marry Muriel. Nonsense! I had just the same difficulty with her mother twenty-six years ago. You ought to remember; you were there! Hadn't I, Emily?

5 EMILY [*faintly*]. Yes.

JOHN [*not hearing*]. What's that?

EMILY. Yes, father. Yes.

JOHN. Of course I had. I wouldn't have it then, and I won't have it now. What? Here's a young fellow, a
10 very smart engineer. Insists on going to Canada. Wants capital! Well, I give it him! I tell him he may go. Everything's settled. And then, if you please, he calmly announces his intention of carrying off my grand-daughter—him!

15 ROSE. If she's your grand-daughter, he's my nephew.

JOHN [*glaring at her*]. Sh!

ROSE. No! I wo——

JOHN [*continuing, staring at ROSE*]. My grand-daughter has got to marry something very different from an engineer.

20 NANCY. If she did she might marry something that'll turn her hair gray a good deal sooner.

JOHN. I have my plans for Muriel.

EMILY. Imagine Muriel in Winnipeg!

MURIEL. What plans, granddad? You've never told
25 me about any plans.

JOHN. Not told you! At your age, your mother had a conspicuous place in London society. And it's your duty to carry on the family tradition. Your mother didn't marry into the peerage so that you could gallivant up and down
30 Winnipeg as the wife of a manufacturing engineer. You have some notion of politics, though it's a mighty queer one——

MURIEL. I hardly think my politics would further your plan, granddad. I should have supposed the whole of my

career would have made it plain that I have the greatest contempt for official politics.

JOHN. Your "career"! Your "contempt"! [*Laughs good-humoredly, then more softly.*] My child——

MURIEL [*nettled*]. I'm not a child. 5

JOHN [*angrily*]. Enough! Don't make yourself ridiculous. [*More quietly.*] Your mother and your brother think as I do. Let that suffice.

RICHARD. Pardon me, sir, but suppose it won't suffice?

JOHN [*furious*]. I—I—— 10

MURIEL [*violently*]. Granddad, do please keep calm.

JOHN [*as above*]. I'm perfectly calm, I believe.

NANCY [*to GERTRUDE*]. Then he'd believe anything!

MURIEL. You don't seem to have understood that we're engaged to be married. 15

GERTRUDE. I must say——

JOHN. And what must *you* say? You'll side with my wife against me, and the girl's own mother, I suppose?

GERTRUDE. I fail to see any objection whatever.

JOHN. Do you, indeed! Well, objection or no objection, 20 I mean it to be stopped—now, at once.

MURIEL. But how shall you stop it, granddad?

JOHN. If I hear one more word of this, one more word—there'll be no thirty thousand pounds for Richard. Not from me, at any rate. And I don't imagine that your mother 25 will help him, or Monkhurst either. Where is he?

MONKHURST. Not much.

MURIEL. But that won't stop it, granddad!

ROSE [*rising, and going to the hall door*]. John, you're a hard, hard old man. The one thing I ask of you, and on 30 our golden wedding day, too, and you won't even listen. You shut me up as though I were a—a— I do think it's a shame. The poor things. [*She goes out in tears.*]

NANCY [*hurrying out after her*]. Rose! Rose! Don't!

JOHN. Here I arrange a nice little family dinner to celebrate the occasion. I invite no outsiders, so that we shall be nice and homely and comfortable. And this is how you treat me. You induce your grandmother to defy me—the
5 first time in her life. You bring your mother to tears, and you——

EMILY. There's nothing to be said in favor of it—nothing. The very thought of it——

RICHARD. I'm awfully sorry.

10 JOHN. No, you aren't, sir. So don't be impudent.

[WEBSTER enters.]

WEBSTER. Mr. Arthur Preece, Sir John. I've shown him into the study.

JOHN. Very good. [WEBSTER goes out.]

GERTRUDE. Why can't Mr. Preece come up here?

15 JOHN. Because he's come to see me on private business, madam. Private, do I say? It's public enough. Every body knows that I can't keep my own workmen in order without the help of a Labor M.P. The country's going to the dogs! My own father used to say so, and I never believed
20 him. But it's true. [He goes to the door.]

MONKHURST. May I come with you, sir? [With a superior glance at MURIEL.] These family ructions——

JOHN. Come! [JOHN goes off, followed by MONKHURST.]

GERTRUDE [meaningly]. Richard, go and see where your
25 mother is, will you? [RICHARD follows the others. A slight pause.]

EMILY [still weakly and tearfully]. How your poor grandmother is upset!

MURIEL. Yes, I'm very sorry.

18. a Labor M.P., a member of the Labor Party in Parliament. During these years labor representation was so establishing itself that with the sudden changes resulting from the War the Labor Party under Ramsay Macdonald came into power in 1924.

EMILY. That's something.

MURIEL. It's such a humiliating sight. No real arguments. No attempt to understand *my* point of view! Nothing but blustering and bullying and stamping up and down. He wants to make out that I'm still a child with no 5 will of my own. But it's he who's the child.

GERTRUDE. Come, come, Muriel.

MURIEL. Yes, it is. A spoiled child! When anything happens that doesn't just please him, there's a fine exhibition of temper. Don't we all know it? And this is the great 10 Sir John Rhead! Bah!

EMILY [*amazed*]. Muriel!

MURIEL. Oh, of course it isn't his fault! Everyone's always given him his own way—especially grandma. It's positively pathetic, grandma trying to turn against him 15 now. Poor old thing! As if she could! Now!

EMILY. Muriel, your cold-bloodedness absolutely frightens me.

MURIEL. But, mother, I'm not cold-blooded. It's only common sense. 20

GERTRUDE [*clumsily caressing Emily*]. Darling!

EMILY. Common sense will be the finish of me; I've no one left in the world now.

GERTRUDE [*hurt*]. Then I suppose I'm too old to count. And yet for nearly fifty years I've lived for nobody but you. 25 Many and many a time I should have been ready to die—yes, glad to—only you were there.

EMILY [*affectionately*]. And yet you're against me now.

GERTRUDE. I only want you not to have any regrets. 30

EMILY. Any regrets! My life has been all regrets. 'Look at me.

GERTRUDE. Not all your life, dear—your marriage. [MURIEL *looks up*.]

EMILY [*firmly, and yet frightened with a look at MURIEL*]. Hush, auntie!

GERTRUDE. Why? Why should I hush? You say your life's been all regrets, if you care about being honest with
5 Muriel, you ought to tell her now that you did not marry the man you were in love with.

EMILY [*in an outburst*]. Don't believe it, Muriel. No one could have been a kinder husband than your father was, and I always loved him.

10 MURIEL [*intimidated by these revelations of feelings*]. Mother!

GERTRUDE. Then what do you regret? You had an affection for Ned, but if you had loved him as you loved—the other one—what is there to regret? And now you seem to be doing your best to make regrets for Muriel—and—
15 and —oh, Emily, why do you do it?

MURIEL [*moved, but controlling herself*]. Yes, mamma! Why? I'm sure I'm open to hear reason on any subject—even marriage.

EMILY [*blackly*]. Reason! Reason! There you are again!
20 My child, you're my oldest, and I've loved you beyond everybody. You've never been attached to me. It isn't your fault, and I don't blame you. Things happen to be like that, that's all. You don't know how hard you are. If you did, you'd be ready to bite your tongue off. Here I am,
25 with you and Gerald. Gerald is not bad at heart, but he's selfish and he's a fool. I could never talk freely to him, as I do to you. One day he'll be asking me to leave Berkeley Square, and I shall go and finish my days in the country. And here you calmly announce you're off to Canada, and
30 you want my *reasons* for objecting! There's only one reason—all the others are nothing—mere excuses—and you couldn't guess that one reason. You have to be told. If you cared for me, you wouldn't force me to the shame of telling you.

MURIEL [*whispering*]. Shame?

EMILY. Isn't it humiliating for a mother to have to tell her daughter, who never's even thought of it, that she cannot bear to lose her—cannot bear?—Canada!

MURIEL [*throwing herself at her mother's knees.*] Mother, 5
I'll never leave you! [*She sobs, burying her face in her mother's lap.*]

GERTRUDE [*softly*]. All this self-sacrifice is a sad mistake. 10
[*To MURIEL.*] None of us can live forever. When your mother is gone—what will you do then?

MURIEL [*climbing up and kissing her mother*]. I'll never leave you!

EMILY. My child!

GERTRUDE [*gently*]. It's wrong of you, Emily! All wrong!

[ARTHUR PREECE *enters from the hall. His hair and mustache have grown gray. His expression and manner slightly disillusioned and cynical. In figure he is the same.*]

PREECE. Good evening. 15

MURIEL [*on seeing him, rises quickly rather like a school-girl.*] Good evening. [*She goes out rapidly. Preece looks after her a little surprised.*]

EMILY [*at once the woman of the world*]. Good evening. 20
You've soon finished your business with father.

PREECE [*puzzled by the appearance of things*]. Good evening. [*He shakes hands with EMILY.*] What is the matter? The old gentleman really wasn't equal to seeing me. I just told him what I had to tell him about the strikers, and then he said I'd perhaps better come up here. I think he wanted 25
to be alone.

EMILY. Poor dear!

PREECE. Nothing serious, I hope?

GERTRUDE [*briskly, shaking PREECE by the hand*]. The usual thing, Mr. Preece, the usual thing! A new generation 30

has got to the marrying age. You know what it is. I know what it is. Now, Emily, don't begin to cry again. People who behave as selfishly as you're doing have no right to weep—except for their sins.

5 EMILY [*protesting*]. Auntie, this can't possibly interest Mr. Preece.

GERTRUDE [*still more briskly*]. Don't talk that kind of conventional nonsense, Emily! You know quite well it will interest Mr. Preece extremely. [*Rising.*] Now just
10 tell him all about it and see what he says. [*With a peculiar tone.*] I suppose you'll admit he ought to be a good judge of such matters? [*She moves to the door.*]

EMILY. Where are you going?

GERTRUDE [*imitating EMILY slightly*]. That can't possibly
15 interest you. [*Wearily.*] I'm out of patience. [*She goes out of the room.*]

EMILY [*trying to force a light tone*]. I hope you had some good news about the workmen for my poor old father. What a finish for his golden wedding day!

20 PREECE [*following her lead*]. Yes, I think his little affair's pretty well fixed up—anyhow for the present. He's shown himself pretty reasonable. If he'd continued to be as obstinate as he was at the start, the thing would have run him into a lot of money.

25 EMILY. I wonder he doesn't retire.

PREECE. He's going to. There's to be a Limited Company.

EMILY. Father—a Limited Company! He told you?

PREECE. Yes.

30 EMILY. Then he must have been feeling it's getting too much for him.

PREECE. Well, considering his years—seventy-seven, isn't it? Some of us will be beaten long before that age. [*He sighs.*]

EMILY. Why that sigh? You aren't getting ready to give up, are you?

PREECE. No, I expect I shall go on till I drop.

EMILY. I should have thought you had every reason to be satisfied with what you have done. 5

PREECE. Why?

EMILY. Unless you regret giving up steel for politics.

PREECE. No. I don't regret that. I'd done all I really wanted to do there. I'd forced your father to take up steel on a big scale. I'd made more than all the money 10 I needed. And other processes were coming along, better than mine.

EMILY. I wonder how many men there are who've succeeded as you have done, both in politics and out of politics.

PREECE. Do you think I've succeeded in politics? 15

EMILY. You haven't held office, but I've always understood it was because you preferred to be independent.

PREECE. It was. I could have sold my soul over and over again for a seat at an Under-Secretary's desk. I wouldn't even lead the Labor Party. 20

EMILY. But everyone knows you're the strongest man in the Labor Party.

PREECE. Well, if I am—the strongest man in the Labor Party is rather depressed.

EMILY. Why? 25

PREECE. Difficult to say. Twenty years ago, I thought the millennium would be just about established in 1912. Instead of that, it's as far off as ever. It's even further off.

EMILY. Further off?

PREECE. Yes. And yet a lot of us have worked. By God, 30 we have! But there's a different spirit now. The men are bitter. They can't lead themselves and they won't be led. They won't be led. And nobody knows what's going to happen next. Except that trouble's going to happen. I

often wonder why I was cursed with the reforming spirit. How much happier I should have been if I'd cared for nothing in this world but my own work—like young Richard Sibley, for instance?

5 EMILY. Isn't he interested in reform?

PREECE. Not he! He's an engineer, only an engineer. He minds his own business. I suppose he's here tonight.

EMILY. Yes.

PREECE [*in an ordinary tone*]. Why won't you let him
10 marry Miss Muriel?

EMILY [*startled*]. Then father's told you?

PREECE. Not a word. But Richard and I are great pals. He's told me his plans. Why shouldn't they marry?

EMILY [*weakly*]. Muriel won't go to Canada.

15 PREECE. Won't go to Canada? But I understand she had a tremendous notion of Canada.

EMILY. She's promised me she won't go.

PREECE. But why should she do that?

EMILY [*half breaking down*]. Oh, I know I'm selfish.
20 But—but—I should be quite alone, if she went. And then, it's not what we'd anticipated for her. We naturally hoped——

PREECE. Oh! Of course if you're in the marriage market——

25 EMILY. No. Really it's not that—at least as far as I'm concerned. I should be so utterly alone. And she's promised me. If she deserted me——

PREECE. Deserted—rather a strong word——

EMILY. Please don't be hard! You don't know how
30 unhappy I am. You admit you're discouraged.

PREECE. I said "depressed."

EMILY. Well, depressed, then. Can't you feel for others?

PREECE [*rather roughly*]. And who made me admit it? Who kept questioning me and worming it out of me? You

wouldn't leave it alone. You're like all the other women-- and I've had to do with a few.

EMILY [*affronted*]. Please——

PREECE. It isn't sufficient for you to make a man unhappy. You aren't satisfied till he admits you've made 5 him unhappy.

EMILY [*protesting*]. Oh!

PREECE. How many times have I seen you since this cursed strike brought me among the family again? Half-a-dozen, perhaps. And every single time I've noticed you 10 feeling your way toward it. And tonight you've just got there.

EMILY. Arthur, you must forgive me. It's quite true. We can't help it.

PREECE. What should I care about lost millenniums and 15 labor troubles ahead, if I'd any genuine personal interest in my own? Not a jot. Not a tinker's curse! Do you remember you let me kiss you—once?

EMILY. Forgive me! I know I oughtn't to be forgiven. But life's so difficult. Ever since I've been seeing you again 20 I've realized how miserable I am—it's such a long time since. It seems as if it was some other girl and not me—twenty-six years ago—here! And yet it's like yesterday. [*She sobs. PREECE embraces her first roughly and then very tenderly.*]

PREECE. My child!

EMILY. I'm an old woman.

25

PREECE. You said it was like yesterday—when you were twenty-three—so it is. [*They kiss again.*]

EMILY [*with a little laugh*]. This will kill father.

PREECE. Not it. Your father has a remarkable constitution. It's much more likely to kill the Labor Party. 30

[JOHN enters, agitated and weary.]

JOHN [*brusquely*]. Where's your mother? She's not in the other room. I thought she was in here. I want to see her.

EMILY. She's probably gone to her own room—poor
5 dear!

JOHN. Can't you go and find her? [*He sits down, discouraged.*]

EMILY [*coming over to him*]. Father, I've been thinking it over, and I'm afraid we shall have to agree to Muriel's
10 marriage.

JOHN. We shall have to agree to it? I shan't agree to it.

EMILY. As Mr. Preece says——

JOHN. Mr. Preece?

EMILY. You know how friendly he is to Richard—as
15 Mr. Preece says, why shouldn't they marry?

PREECE. I merely ventured to put the question, Sir John.

JOHN. Why shouldn't they? Because they shouldn't. Isn't that enough? [*To EMILY.*] A quarter of an hour ago
20 you yourself agreed in the most positive way that there was nothing whatever to be said in favor of such a match.

EMILY. I was rather overlooking the fact that they're in love with each other—[*glancing at PREECE*—a quarter of an hour ago.

JOHN. Are all you women gone mad tonight? Preece,
25 do you reckon *you* understand women?

PREECE. Now and then one gets a glimpse, sir.

JOHN [*realizing state of affairs between PREECE and EMILY*].
H'm!

EMILY [*noticing her father watch her, rather self-consciously*].
30 After all, what difference can it make to us? We shan't be here as long as they will.

JOHN. What? What?

EMILY [*louder*]. We shan't be here as long as they will, I
say.

35 JOHN. That's it! Tell me I'm an old man! Of course,

it can't make any difference to us. I was looking at the matter solely from their point of view. How can it affect me—*whom* Muriel marries?

EMILY. Well, then! Let them judge for themselves. You agree? [JOHN *stares before him obstinately.*] Father—— 5
[JOHN *shakes his head impatiently.*] Dad!

JOHN [*looking up like a sulky child*]. Oh, have it your own way. I'm not the girl's mother. If you've made up your mind, there's nothing more to be said.

EMILY. And Richard's capital? 10

JOHN. Oh, it's all lying ready. [*Shrugs his shoulders.*]
May as well have it, I suppose.

EMILY. You're a dear!

JOHN. I'm not a dear, and I hate to be called a dear.

EMILY. What a shocking untruth! I shall go and tell 15
them, I think. [*She goes to the door.*]

JOHN [*calling her back*]. Emily!

EMILY. Yes.

JOHN. Don't let them come in here. I couldn't bear it.

EMILY. Oh, but —— 20

JOHN. I couldn't stand the strain of another scene. It's late now—I'm an old man, and people have no right to upset me in this way.

EMILY. Couldn't they just say good-night?

JOHN. Very well. They must say good-night and go at 25
once. Another day——

EMILY [*very soothingly*]. I'll tell them you're very tired.

[*She nods smilingly at her father and leaves the room. A slight pause.*]

PREECE. A difficult job, being the head of a family.

JOHN. I've done with it, Preece. I've decided that tonight—that's what a golden wedding comes to in these 30
days. Things aren't what they were. In my time a man was at any rate master in his own house and on his own

works. Seemed natural enough! But you've changed all that.

PREECE. I've changed it?

JOHN [*continuing confidentially*]. Why, even my own wife's
5 gone against me tonight. My own wife! [*Troubled.*] Did you ever hear of such a thing?

PREECE. I *have* heard of it, Sir John.

JOHN [*grimly*]. You laugh. Wait till you're married.

PREECE. I may have to wait a long time.

10 JOHN. Eh, what? A long time? Don't try to hood-wink me, Preece. I know what you all say when I'm not there. "Old Rhead." "Be breaking up soon, the old man!" But I'm not yet quite doddering. [*Pointedly.*] You'll be
15 married inside six months—and every newspaper in London will be full of it. Yes, answer that. My workmen go out on strike, and you poke your nose in and arrange it for me. Then my family go out on strike, and upon my soul, you
20 poke your damned nose in there, too, and arrange that for me—on your own terms. Tut—tut! Shake hands, man! You and your like are running the world to the devil, and I'm too old to step in and knock you down. But—but—I wish you luck, my lad. You're a good sort. [*They shake hands.* EMILY, NANCY, MURIEL, RICHARD and GERTRUDE
all enter from the hall.]

25 PREECE. Well, good-night, Sir John.

EMILY [*cheerfully*]. We're just coming to say good-night, grandpapa. I'm sure you must be very tired. We've said good-night to granny.

JOHN [*feebly*]. Where is she? Where is granny?

30 NANCY [*heartily shaking hands*]. Good-night, John, and thank you for a very pleasant time. [*She goes to GERTRUDE, who now stands near the door, and kisses her good-night.*]

RICHARD [*heartily shaking hands*]. Thank you, sir. [*NANCY passes out by the door. GERTRUDE now shakes hands with*

35 RICHARD, who follows his mother.]

EMILY [*kisses JOHN*]. Good-night, dear.

[JOHN, *turning from EMILY, moves with a generous gesture to MURIEL, who, however, keeps a very stiff demeanor and shakes hands in cold silence. EMILY has reached GERTRUDE. They both watch Muriel.*]

EMILY [*with a shade of disappointment turns to GERTRUDE*]. Good-night, auntie. [GERTRUDE and EMILY embrace; then EMILY passes quickly out of the door.]

JOHN [*stiffly, looking about*]. Where's Monkhurst? 5

GERTRUDE. Oh, he is gone! He said he had an appointment at the Club.

JOHN. What Club? The Carlton?

MURIEL [*shaking hands with GERTRUDE*]. The Automobile, you may depend. [*She goes off by the door quickly.*] 10

GERTRUDE. Well, this day is over. [WEBSTER enters from the hall.]

WEBSTER. Any orders, Sir John?

JOHN. None.

GERTRUDE. Can't we have some of the blaze of electricity turned off? 15

JOHN. As you like.

[WEBSTER extinguishes several clusters with the switches at the door, then goes out. The room is left in a discreet light.]

JOHN [*almost plaintively*]. Where's Rose? [ROSE enters timidly from the hall.]

GERTRUDE. Here she is. 20

ROSE [*going up to JOHN*]. John, forgive me for having dared to differ from my dear husband.

JOHN [*taking her hand softly*]. Old girl—[*then half humorously shaking his head*—you'll be the death of me, if you do it again. 25

GERTRUDE. I think I'm going to bed.

JOHN. No, not yet.

ROSE. Gertrude, will you do me a favor on my golden wedding-day?

GERTRUDE. What is it?

ROSE. Sing for us.

GERTRUDE. Oh! My singing days are over long ago.

JOHN [*persuasively*]. Go on—go on. There's nobody
5 but us to hear.

GERTRUDE. Really it is—— [*Stops.*] Very well. [*GERTRUDE goes through the double doors. ROSE draws her lace shawl round her.*]

JOHN. Let's sit by the fire if you're cold.

[*He moves a chair in place for her gallantly. ROSE sits to the left of the fire. JOHN takes a seat to the right of the fire. The song "Juanita" is heard in a cracked and ancient voice, very gently and faintly.*]

10 ROSE [*softly, by the fire*]. When I think of all this room has seen——

JOHN [*looking into the fire*]. Ah!

ROSE. I'm sure it's very pleasant to remember.

JOHN. Ah! That's because you're pleasant. I've said
15 it before, and I say it again. The women of today aren't what women used to be. They're hard. They've none of the old charm. Unsexed—that's what they are—unsexed.

[*MURIEL enters quickly from the hall in a rich white cloak. She pauses smiling, then hurries delicately across to her grandfather and embraces him; releases him, shyly takes a flower from her bosom, drops it into his hand, turns and gives her grandmother a smile, whispering, "Good-night. They're waiting for me," and hurries out again.*]

JOHN [*looking at the flower*]. We live and learn.

ROSE [*nodding her head*]. Yes, John. [*The song con-*
20 *tinues.*]

CURTAIN

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. Summarize and compare Act III with Acts I and II with reference to similar and changed situations.
2. Dramatically, what sustains the interest in this act?
3. Summarize details which give the atmosphere of 1912 to the act.
4. Are you satisfied with the closing of the play?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Rose, Emily, and Muriel—comparison and contrast.
2. John Rhead, Preece, and Richard—comparison and contrast.

THE PLAY AS A WHOLE

I. QUESTIONS

1. What is the significance of the title?
2. What is the authors' idea in this play? From the point of view of this idea what is Gertrude's part in the play?
3. With what character do you sympathize most in *Milestones*?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Observe that each act is practically a complete unit in itself. Compare with *Caste* in this respect.
2. Discuss the following in relation to *Caste* and life today as you know it:
MURIEL (page 192): "Hasn't it occurred to you even yet that the aristocracy racket's played out?"
3. Industrial problems in Act II in relation to those presented in *Strife*.
4. A study of a similar problem of the changing order as shown in *Change*.
5. The industrial problem in *The Weavers*.
6. The new generation and the old in *The Inheritors*.

READINGS IN CONNECTION WITH *MILESTONES*I. BACKGROUND FOR *Milestones*

- Cambridge Modern History* (The Macmillan Company, 1917), Volume XII, "The Latest Age," Chapter XXIII (by Sidney Webb), "Social Movements."
- A. L. Cross, *A Shorter History of England and Greater Britain* (The Macmillan Company, 1920), pages 727-751.
- R. H. Gretton, *A Modern History of the English People* (Small, Maynard and Company, 1913). See chapter headings and index.
- Carleton J. H. Hayes, *A Political and Social History of Modern Europe* (The Macmillan Company, 1920), Volume II, Chapter XVIII, "The Industrial Revolution"; Chapter XXI, "Social Factors in Recent European History"; Chapter XXII, "British Social Legislation," pages 307-319.
- Sidney Low and L. C. Sanders, *Political History of England* (Longmans, Green, and Company, 1907), Volume XII, Chapter XX, "Literature and Social Development."
- Justin McCarthy, *A History of Our Own Times to 1880* (Chatto and Windus, 1890), Volume III. See index and chapter headings.
- J. Salwyn Schapiro, *Modern and Contemporary European History* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1918), Chapter III, "The Industrial Revolution"; Chapter XXIV, "Revolutionary Labor Movements"; Chapter XXV, "The Woman's Movement"; Chapter XXVI, "Science."
- H. D. Traill and J. S. Mann, *Social England* (Putnam, 1902), Volume VI for Victorian England.

II. PLAYS TO BE READ FOR COMPARISON
WITH *Milestones*

- J. O. Francis, *Change*. Tragedy which centers around the changes in social, religious, and industrial affairs coming through the new generation. Treats of working class.

John Galsworthy, *Strife*. Read in connection with Act III of *Milestones*. Presents clash between capital and labor in English industry.

Susan Glaspell, *The Inheritors*. Progressiveness in the first generation, conservatism inclined to the reactionary in the second, and progressiveness inclined to radicalism in the third. Setting in the Middle West.

Gerhart Hauptmann, *The Weavers*. Presents a problem similar to that of *Strife* between capital and labor, by the leading German dramatist.

III. A FEW BOOKS SUGGESTED FOR MODERN ENGLISH DRAMA

William Archer, *The Old Drama and the New* (Small, Maynard and Company, 1923). See especially Chapters XI-XIV for discussion of the new drama.

F. W. Chandler, *Aspects of Modern Drama* (The Macmillan Company, 1914). Contains adequate summaries of a large number of English plays.

Barrett H. Clark, *The British and American Drama of To-day* (Henry Holt and Company, 1915). Study outlines and analyses for leading British dramatists.

T. H. Dickinson, *The Contemporary Drama of England* (Little, Brown and Company, 1917). A brief and elementary survey of nineteenth-century and modern English drama.

Augustin Filon, *The English Stage*, translated by Frederic Whyte (Dodd, Mead and Company, 1897). Keen and discriminating analysis by a Frenchman of the course of English drama in the nineteenth century. Comes down only into the midst of the period of transition.

IV. ANTHOLOGIES

T. H. Dickinson, *Chief Contemporary Dramatists* (Houghton Mifflin Company). First series (1915). Contains a play by each of the following: Wilde, Pinero, Jones, Galsworthy, and Barker. Second Series (1921). Three English

plays: Bennett and Knoblock, Maugham, and Drinkwater. Both series contain individual and special bibliographies.

Montrose J. Moses, *Representative British Dramas—Victorian and Modern* (Little, Brown and Company, 1918). The only anthology devoted exclusively to nineteenth-century and modern British drama. Includes general and individual bibliographies.

V. INDIVIDUAL PLAYS SUGGESTED FOR FURTHER READING

Granville Barker, *The Voysey Inheritance*, *Prunella*.

Sir James Barrie, *Quality Street*, *The Little Minister*, *What Every Woman Knows*, *Peter Pan*, *Half Hours*, *A Kiss for Cinderella*, *Echoes of the War*.

John Drinkwater, *Abraham Lincoln*, *Robert E. Lee*.

J. O. Francis, *Change*.

John Galsworthy, *The Silver Box*, *Justice*, *Strife*, *The Skin Game*.

W. S. Gilbert, *The Mikado*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *H. M. S. Pinafore*.

St. John Hankin, *The Cassilis Engagement*.

Henry Arthur Jones, *Michael and His Lost Angel*, *Mary Goes First*.

John Masefield, *The Tragedy of Nan*.

Sir Arthur W. Pinero, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, *Sweet Lavender*, *Trelawney of the "Wells."*

G. B. Shaw, *You Never Can Tell*, *Candida*, *How He Lied to Her Husband*, *John Bull's Other Island*, *Major Barbara*, *The Devil's Disciple*, *O'Flaherty V. C.*

Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*.

VI. ARNOLD BENNETT AND EDWARD KNOBLOCK Bennett

GENERAL:

The Truth about an Author (George H. Doran Company, 1911). Bennett's literary autobiography. First published anonymously.

The Author's Craft (George H. Doran Company, 1914).
Read especially part III, pages 69-99, which is on writing plays.

PLAYS:

Polite Farces (1899): *The Stepmother*, *The Good Woman*, *A Question of Sex*. Clever; the last especially is very amusing. An uncle pays the father of the first baby ten thousand pounds on condition that he doesn't have to see the child until it is six months old nor have to handle it until it is two years old.

What the Public Wants (1909). Treats of a successful journalist who succeeds because he knows exactly what the public wants and gives it what it desires.

The Title (1918). A delightful wartime farce-comedy. The husband is offered a title. He wants to refuse. His wife wants him to accept so that she may be called "my lady."

Body and Soul (1921). An amusing satire on the mad pranks of a notable English lady and on "dual personalities."

NOVELS:

Bennett's most significant novels are the trilogy (*Clayhanger*, *Hilda Lessways*, and *Those Two*) and *The Old Wives' Tale*.

Knoblock

PLAYS:

Kismet (1911). A situation in the spirit and atmosphere of *The Arabian Nights*; the romantic adventures of a beggar through a period of twelve hours. Besides being a great success on the American stage, it has been presented with great favor as a movie.

My Lady's Dress (1914). A presentation in dramatic scenes of all the processes connected with the making of a lady's dress. The scenes include Italy, France, Holland, Siberia, and London.

RIDERS TO THE SEA
(1904)

BY
JOHN M. SYNGE

Riders to the Sea is here reprinted by special permission of John W. Luce and Company, Boston, publishers.

INTRODUCTION TO *RIDERS TO THE SEA*

I. JOHN M. SYNGE (1871-1909)

As Robertson is distinctly a man of the theatre, and Bennett a practical and eminently successful man of letters, so John M. Synge is an artist with a wide curiosity and an insatiable *Wanderlust*. A scholar-gypsy, he has kinship in this respect with George Borrow, Lafcadio Hearn, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Oliver Goldsmith, his fellow countryman of over a century earlier.

Synge was born near Dublin, April 16, 1871. As a boy, with a naturalist's passion he "delighted in taking long walks through the country, generally alone and studying the habits and ways of living things." After a period at Trinity College (1888-1892), with his major interest in music and languages, he lived a wandering, adventurous life on the continent, spending a year in Germany, now tramping through the rural districts and now studying music. He intended at this time to become a professional musician. Abandoning this purpose, he turned to Paris. For the next few years he spent his time in France, Italy, and Ireland. In Paris he continued the study of Irish and French literature which he had begun during his student days at Trinity College. Here he had decided to become a critic and interpreter of French literature, when in March, 1898, he met William Butler Yeats. This meeting was fortunate for Synge, for the Celtic Renaissance in general, and for the Irish Theatre in particular. During their conversation Yeats said to Synge:

Give up Paris; you will never create anything by reading Racine, and Arthur Symons will always be a better critic of

French literature. Go to the Aran Islands. Live there as if you were one of the people themselves; express a life that has never found expression.

Acting upon this advice, Synge left Paris for the Aran Islands in May, 1898. Between this time and his death in 1909 he made several visits to these islands, off the west coast of Ireland. The record of his life there among the peasants, of his impressions, and of the folk material which he collected, he tells with the charm, simplicity, and directness of a great literary artist, in *The Aran Islands*. And his plays, with one or two exceptions, grew out of his experiences or his observations there.

The relation of *Riders to the Sea* to his life on the Aran Islands is well summarized by his biographer, Maurice Bourgeois, to whom I am most largely indebted for the facts of his life:

The site of the play is pitched in "an island off the west of Ireland"—undoubtedly Aran. On wave-bitten, wind-swept Innishmaan, Synge had perceived the awe-inspiring tragicality of the seamen's lives, with the shiver of peasant grief at the human toll exacted by the rapacious deep, and the agony of women young and old who can do no more than wait and weep at home. It was on his fourth visit to the Aran Isles that he heard of the case of "second sight" which suggested the very imaginative title of the tragedy: "When the horses were coming down to the slip an old woman saw her son, that was drowned a while ago, riding on one of them"; and he had previously made miscellaneous observations about the islanders' way of riding, the maternal feeling among the women, the fisherfolk's continual dread of the sea, above all about the natives' attitude toward death, that have unmistakably gone to the making of the play.

It will be readily conceded that a tracing of the psychological process by which Synge welded together these many details into a harmonious whole, although a task of extreme interest, would be a somewhat hazardous reconstruction, given the lack of biographical information, and the absence of any central "source" as in the case of *In the Shadow of the Glen*. (Maurice

Bourgeois, *John M. Synge and the Irish Theatre*, pp. 159-160. See further suggestions in Edward J. O'Brien's introduction to his edition of *Riders to the Sea*.)

II. THE IRISH DRAMA

A sound conception of what the Irish drama means in its various relations requires an approach to it from two points of view. In the first place, it is only one aspect of the Celtic Renaissance; and in the second, it is another expression of the international movement for a new drama, presented for its own sake and not primarily for profit.

The Celtic Renaissance is a social, economic, intellectual, and aesthetic movement to reconstruct the life of modern Ireland. This is not the place to present even the most summarized history of the Irish people; but it is fundamental to know that, after the passing of the Roman rulers, Ireland was for a long period the home of culture for Western civilization and that, after many centuries of unsuccessful struggles, she has finally recovered something of her national life and has achieved economic reforms of permanent value and created a national modern literature of genuine worth. This is due as far as our immediate period is concerned largely to the leadership of such men as Sir Horace Plunkett and Dr. Douglas Hyde. In 1889 the former initiated the movement which led to the formation of the Irish Agricultural Organization Society. This Society under the guidance of Sir Horace Plunkett and George William Russell ("A. E.") has been responsible for one of the most successful experiments in all phases of coöperative agriculture in the world today. And Dr. Hyde, with the assistance of others, in 1893 formed the Gaelic League for "the preservation of Irish as a racial language, the study of ancient Irish literature, and the creation of a modern literature in modern Irish." In all of these aims it has succeeded to a great degree. But the world at large knows of modern national Irish literature only through the medium of modern dialect or standard

English. It is through this last phase of the Celtic Renaissance that we find connections with the Irish Theatre.

The story of the founding of the Irish Theatre and the development of a national drama is best told by Lady Gregory (*Our Irish Theatre*), who is, probably, more responsible than anyone else for the development of this aspect of the Celtic Renaissance. As a result of an after-dinner conversation which she had in 1898 with Mr. William Butler Yeats, the Irish poet and dramatist, concerning the desirability of an Irish theatre, the Irish Literary Theatre was formed, and in 1899 a company of English actors was organized for Dublin performances. After three years the project was continued under the immediate direction of William G. Fay and his brother Frank, with clerks and other laymen as amateur Irish actors, who at first contributed their services without pay as their evening recreation to assist the cause. In 1904, through the benefaction of Miss Horniman, an Englishwoman, the company came into possession of the building now known as the Abbey Theatre. And thus was formed The Abbey Players who appeared in American performances in 1911 and 1912.

From a national point of view the most distinctive contribution of this group is the development of interest in the drama of the life of the folk. John M. Synge and Lady Gregory especially spent years among the poor people of Western Ireland, collecting folk tales, familiarizing themselves with the daily lives of these simple peasants, and studying their dialects. Notable among other dramatists who have been connected with the Irish Theatre are Edward Martyn, Dr. Douglas Hyde, Padraic Colum, Lennox Robinson, T. C. Murray, Rutherford Mayme, St. John Ervine, and Lord Dunsany.

From an international point of view this group represents the opposition to the conventionalized play and the commercial drama. In this respect it is a sequent part of the movement for the free theatre as observed in Paris (1887), Berlin (1889), and London (1891). It is significant, in this

connection, that the Irish Theatre has produced plays by leading modern continental dramatists. It is interesting also to recall that the movement for better drama was initiated only a few years later in the United States. The story of this phase appears under the introduction to Eugene O'Neill's plays.

PERSONS

MAURYA, *an old woman*

BARTLEY, *her son*

CATHLEEN, *her daughter*

NORA, *a younger daughter*

MEN AND WOMEN

RIDERS TO THE SEA*

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

First performed at the Molesworth Hall, Dublin,

February 25th, 1904

SCENE. *An Island off the West of Ireland. Cottage kitchen, with nets, oilskins, spinning-wheel, some new boards standing by the wall, etc. CATHLEEN, a girl of about twenty, finishes kneading cake, and puts it down in the pot-oven by the fire; then wipes her hands, and begins to spin at the wheel. NORA, a young girl, puts her head in at the door.*

NORA [*in a low voice*]. Where is she?

CATHLEEN. She's lying down, God help her, and may be sleeping, if she's able.

[NORA comes in softly, and takes a bundle from under her shawl.]

CATHLEEN [*spinning the wheel rapidly*]. What is it you have?

NORA. The young priest is after bringing them. It's a shirt and a plain stocking were got off a drowned man in Donegal.

[CATHLEEN stops her wheel with a sudden movement, and leans out to listen.]

*Copyright, 1916, by L. E. Bassett. All rights reserved.

Stage direction. *pot-oven*, an iron pot used for roasting.

8. *Donegal*, a county in the Province of Ulster. This and the other geographical names in the play are real localities, which may be located by the student on a good map of Ireland.

NORA. We're to find out if it's Michael's they are; some time herself will be down looking by the sea.

CATHLEEN. How would they be Michael's, Nora? How would he go the length of that way to the far north?

5 NORA. The young priest says he's known the like of it. "If it's Michael's they are," says he, "you can tell herself he's got a clean burial by the grace of God, and if they're not his, let no one say a word about them, for she'll be getting her death," says he, "with crying and lamenting."

[The door which NORA half closed is blown open by a gust of wind.]

10 CATHLEEN [looking out anxiously]. Did you ask him would he stop Bartley going this day with the horses to the Galway fair?

NORA. "I won't stop him," says he, "but let you not be afraid. Herself does be saying prayers half through the
15 night, and the Almighty God won't leave her destitute," says he, "with no son living."

CATHLEEN. Is the sea bad by the white rocks, Nora?

NORA. Middling bad, God help us. There's a great roaring in the west, and it's worse it'll be getting when the
20 tide's turned to the wind. [She goes over to the table with the bundle.] Shall I open it now?

CATHLEEN. Maybe she'd wake up on us, and come in before we'd done. [Coming to the table.] It's a long time we'll be, and the two of us crying.

25 NORA [goes to the inner door and listens]. She's moving about on the bed. She'll be coming in a minute.

CATHLEEN. Give me the ladder, and I'll put them up in the turf-loft, the way she won't know of them at all, and maybe when the tide turns she'll be going down to see would
30 he be floating from the east.

[*They put the ladder against the gable of the chimney; CATHLEEN goes up a few steps and hides the bundle in the turf-loft. MAURYA comes from the inner room.*]

MAURYA [*looking up at CATHLEEN and speaking querulously*]. Isn't it turf enough you have for this day and evening?

CATHLEEN. There's a cake baking at the fire for a short space [*throwing down the turf*], and Bartley will want it when the tide turns if he goes to Connemara.

[*NORA picks up the turf and puts it round the pot-oven.*]

MAURYA [*sitting down on a stool at the fire*]. He won't go this day with the wind rising from the south and west. He won't go this day, for the young priest will stop him surely.

NORA. He'll not stop him, mother, and I heard Eamon Simon and Stephen Pheety and Colum Shawn saying he would go.

MAURYA. Where is he itself?

NORA. He went down to see would there be another boat sailing in the week, and I'm thinking it won't be long till he's here now, for the tide's turning at the green head, and the hooker's tacking from the east.

CATHLEEN. I hear someone passing the big stones.

NORA [*looking out*]. He's coming now, and he's in a hurry.

BARTLEY [*comes in and looks round the room. Speaking sadly and quietly*]. Where is the bit of new rope, Cathleen, was bought in Connemara?

CATHLEEN [*coming down*]. Give it to him, Nora; it's on a nail by the white boards. I hung it up this morning, for the pig with the black feet was eating it.

NORA [*giving him a rope*]. Is that it, Bartley?

Stage direction. *turf*, peat, a kind of fuel.

17. *hooker*, fishing boat with one mast; *tacking*, changing direction by shifting sails.

MAURYA. You'd do right to leave that rope, Bartley, hanging by the boards. [BARTLEY *takes the rope*.] It will be wanting in this place, I'm telling you, if Michael is washed up tomorrow morning, or the next morning, or any morning
5 in the week, for it's a deep grave we'll make him by the grace of God.

BARTLEY [*beginning to work with the rope*]. I've no halter the way I can ride down on the mare, and I must go now quickly. This is the one boat going for two weeks or beyond
10 it, and the fair will be a good fair for horses I heard them saying below.

MAURYA. It's a hard thing they'll be saying below if the body is washed up and there's no man in it to make the coffin, and I after giving a big price for the finest white
15 boards you'd find in Connemara. [*She looks round at the boards*.]

BARTLEY. How would it be washed up, and we after looking each day for nine days, and a strong wind blowing a while back from the west and south?

20 MAURYA. If it wasn't found itself, that wind is raising the sea, and there was a star up against the moon, and it rising in the night. If it was a hundred horses, or a thousand horses you had itself, what is the price of a thousand horses against a son where there is one son only?

25 BARTLEY [*working at the halter, to CATHLEEN*]. Let you go down each day, and see the sheep aren't jumping in on the rye, and if the jobber comes you can sell the pig with the black feet if there is a good price going.

MAURYA. How would the like of her get a good price
30 for a pig?

BARTLEY [*to CATHLEEN*]. If the west wind holds with the last bit of the moon let you and Nora get up weed enough

32. *weed*, a variety of seaweed from which a fertilizer, known as kelp, is made.

for another cock for the kelp. It's hard set we'll be from this day with no one in it but one man to work.

MAURYA. It's hard set we'll be surely the day you're drowned with the rest. What way will I live and the girls with me, and I an old woman looking for the grave?

[BARTLEY *lays down the halter, takes off his old coat, and puts on a newer one of the same flannel.*]

BARTLEY [to NORA]. Is she coming to the pier?

NORA [looking out]. She's passing the green head and letting fall her sails.

BARTLEY [getting his purse and tobacco]. I'll have half an hour to go down, and you'll see me coming again in two days, 10 or in three days, or maybe in four days if the wind is bad.

MAURYA [turning round to the fire, and putting her shawl over her head]. Isn't it a hard and cruel man won't hear a word from an old woman, and she holding him from the sea?

CATHLEEN. It's the life of a young man to be going on 15 the sea, and who would listen to an old woman with one thing and she saying it over?

BARTLEY [taking the halter]. I must go now quickly. I'll ride down on the red mare, and the gray pony'll run behind me. . . . The blessing of God on you. [He goes out.] 20

MAURYA [crying out as he is in the door]. He's gone now, God spare us, and we'll not see him again. He's gone now, and when the black night is falling I'll have no son left me in the world.

CATHLEEN. Why wouldn't you give him your blessing 25 and he looking round in the door? Isn't it sorrow enough is on everyone in this house without your sending him out with an unlucky word behind him, and a hard word in his ear?

[MAURYA takes up the tongs and begins raking the fire aimlessly without looking round.]

1. cock, a fishing boat.

NORA [*turning toward her*]. You're taking away the turf from the cake.

CATHLEEN [*crying out*]. The Son of God forgive us, Nora, we're after forgetting his bit of bread. [*She comes over to*
5 *the fire.*]

NORA. And it's destroyed he'll be going till dark night, and he after eating nothing since the sun went up.

CATHLEEN [*turning the cake out of the oven*]. It's destroyed he'll be, surely. There's no sense left on any person in a
10 house where an old woman will be talking forever.

[MAURYA sways herself on her stool.]

CATHLEEN [*cutting off some of the bread and rolling it in a cloth; to MAURYA*]. Let you go down now to the spring well and give him this and he passing. You'll see him then and the dark word will be broken, and you can say "God
15 speed you," the way he'll be easy in his mind.

MAURYA [*taking the bread*]. Will I be in it as soon as himself?

CATHLEEN. If you go now quickly.

MAURYA [*standing up unsteadily*]. It's hard set I am to
20 walk.

CATHLEEN [*looking at her anxiously*]. Give her the stick, Nora, or maybe she'll slip on the big stones.

NORA. What stick?

CATHLEEN. The stick Michael brought from Connemara.

25 MAURYA [*taking a stick NORA gives her*]. In the big world the old people do be leaving things after them for their sons and children, but in this place it is the young men do be leaving things behind for them that do be old. [*She goes out slowly. NORA goes over to the ladder.*]

30 CATHLEEN. Wait, Nora, maybe she'd turn back quickly. She's that sorry, God help her, you wouldn't know the thing she'd do.

NORA. Is she gone round by the bush?

CATHLEEN [*looking out*]. She's gone now. Throw it down quickly, for the Lord knows when she'll be out of it again.

NORA [*getting the bundle from the loft*]. The young priest said he'd be passing tomorrow, and we might go down and 5 speak to him below if it's Michael's they are surely.

CATHLEEN [*taking the bundle*]. Did he say what way they were found?

NORA [*coming down*]. "There were two men," says he, "and they rowing round with poteen before the cocks crowed, 10 and the oar of one of them caught the body, and they passing the black cliffs of the north."

CATHLEEN [*trying to open the bundle*]. Give me a knife, Nora; the string's perished with the salt water, and there's a black knot on it you wouldn't loosen in a week. 15

NORA [*giving her a knife*]. I've heard tell it was a long way to Donegal.

CATHLEEN [*cutting the string*]. It is surely. There was a man in here a while ago—the man sold us that knife—and he said if you set off walking from the rocks beyond, it would 20 be seven days you'd be in Donegal.

NORA. And what time would a man take, and he floating?

[CATHLEEN opens the bundle and takes out a bit of a stocking. They look at them eagerly.]

CATHLEEN [*in a low voice*]. The Lord spare us, Nora! isn't it a queer hard thing to say if it's his they are surely?

NORA. I'll get his shirt off the hook the way we can put 25 the one flannel on the other. [*She looks through some clothes hanging in the corner.*] It's not with them, Cathleen, and where will it be?

CATHLEEN. I'm thinking Bartley put it on him in the morning, for his own shirt was heavy with the salt in it 30 [*pointing to the corner*]. There's a bit of a sleeve was of the

same stuff. Give me that and it will do. [NORA brings it to her and they compare the flannel.] It's the same stuff, Nora; but if it is itself, aren't there great rolls of it in the shops of Galway, and isn't it many another man may have a shirt of it as well as Michael himself?

NORA [*who has taken up the stocking and counted the stitches, crying out*]. It's Michael, Cathleen, it's Michael; God spare his soul, and what will herself say when she hears this story, and Bartley on the sea?

10 CATHLEEN [*taking the stocking*]. It's a plain stocking.

NORA. It's the second one of the third pair I knitted, and I put up three score stitches, and I dropped four of them.

CATHLEEN [*counts the stitches*]. It's that number is in it [*crying out*]. Ah, Nora, isn't it a bitter thing to think of
15 him floating that way to the far north, and no one to keen him but the black hags that do be flying on the sea?

NORA [*swinging herself round, and throwing out her arms on the clothes*]. And isn't it a pitiful thing when there is nothing left of a man who was a great rower and fisher,
20 but a bit of an old shirt and a plain stocking?

CATHLEEN [*after an instant*]. Tell me is herself coming, Nora? I hear a little sound on the path.

NORA [*looking out*]. She is, Cathleen. She's coming up to the door.

25 CATHLEEN. Put these things away before she'll come in. Maybe it's easier she'll be after giving her blessing to Bartley, and we won't let on we've heard anything the time he's on the sea.

NORA [*helping CATHLEEN to close the bundle*]. We'll put
30 them here in the corner. [*They put them into a hole in the chimney corner. CATHLEEN goes back to the spinning-wheel.*] Will she see it was crying I was?

15. *keen*, bewail. A keen is a lamentation for the dead.

16. *black hags*, witches—an indication of the superstitious character of the persons of the play.

CATHLEEN. Keep your back to the door the way the light'll not be on you.

[NORA sits down at the chimney corner, with her back to the door. MAURYA comes in very slowly, without looking at the girls, and goes over to her stool at the other side of the fire. The cloth with the bread is still in her hand. The girls look at each other, and NORA points to the bundle of bread.]

CATHLEEN [after spinning for a moment]. You didn't give him his bit of bread?

[MAURYA begins to keen softly, without turning round.]

CATHLEEN. Did you see him riding down?

5

[MAURYA goes on keening.]

CATHLEEN [a little impatiently]. God forgive you; isn't it a better thing to raise your voice and tell what you seen, than to be making lamentation for a thing that's done? Did you see Bartley, I'm saying to you.

MAURYA [with a weak voice]. My heart's broken from this day. 10

CATHLEEN [as before]. Did you see Bartley?

MAURYA. I seen the fearfulest thing.

CATHLEEN [leaves her wheel and looks out]. God forgive you; he's riding the mare now over the green head, and the gray pony behind him. 15

MAURYA [starts, so that her shawl falls back from her head and shows her white tossed hair. With a frightened voice]. The gray pony behind him?

CATHLEEN [coming to the fire]. What is it ails you, at all? 20

MAURYA [speaking very slowly]. I've seen the fearfulest thing any person has seen, since the day Bride Dara seen the dead man with the child in his arms.

CATHLEEN and NORA. Uah! [*They crouch down in front of the old woman at the fire.*]

NORA. Tell us what it is you seen.

MAURYA. I went down to the spring well, and I stood
5 there saying a prayer to myself. Then Bartley came along,
and he riding on the red mare with the gray pony behind
him. [*She puts up her hands, as if to hide something from
her eyes.*] The Son of God spare us, Nora!

CATHLEEN. What is it you seen.

10 MAURYA. I seen Michael himself.

CATHLEEN [*speaking softly*]. You did not, mother; it
wasn't Michael you seen, for his body is after being found
in the far north, and he's got a clean burial by the grace of
God.

15 MAURYA [*a little defiantly*]. I'm after seeing him this day,
and he riding and galloping. Bartley came first on the red
mare; and I tried to say "God speed you," but something
choked the words in my throat. He went by quickly; and
"The blessing of God on you," says he, and I could say
20 nothing. I looked up then, and I crying, at the gray pony,
and there was Michael upon it—with fine clothes on him,
and new shoes on his feet.

CATHLEEN [*begins to keen*]. It's destroyed we are from
this day. It's destroyed, surely.

25 NORA. Didn't the young priest say the Almighty God
wouldn't leave her destitute with no son living?

MAURYA [*in a low voice, but clearly*]. It's little the like
of him knows of the sea. . . . Bartley will be lost now, and
let you call in Eamon and make me a good coffin out of
30 the white boards, for I won't live after them. I've had a
husband, and a husband's father, and six sons in this house—
six fine men, though it was a hard birth I had with every
one of them and they coming to the world—and some of
them were found and some of them were not found, but

they're gone now the lot of them. . . . There were Stephen and Shawn, were lost in the great wind, and found after in the Bay of Gregory of the Golden Mouth, and carried up the two of them on the one plank, and in by that door.

[She pauses for a moment; the girls start as if they heard something through the door that is half open behind them.]

NORA *[in a whisper]*. Did you hear that, Cathleen? 5
Did you hear a noise in the northeast?

CATHLEEN *[in a whisper]*. There's someone after crying out by the seashore.

MAURYA *[continues without hearing anything]*. There was Sheamus and his father, and his own father again, were lost 10
in a dark night, and not a stick or sign was seen of them when the sun went up. There was Patch after was drowned out of a curagh that turned over. I was sitting here with Bartley, and he a baby, lying on my two knees, and I seen two women, and three women, and four women coming in, and they 15
crossing themselves, and not saying a word. I looked out then, and there were men coming after them, and they holding a thing in the half of a red sail, and water dripping out of it—it was a dry day, Nora—and leaving a track to the door. 20

[She pauses again with her hand stretched out toward the door.

It opens softly and old women begin to come in, crossing themselves on the threshold, and kneeling down in front of the stage with red petticoats over their heads.]

MAURYA *[half in a dream, to CATHLEEN]*. Is it Patch, or Michael, or what is it at all?

CATHLEEN. Michael is after being found in the far north, and when he is found there how could he be here in this place? 25

13. *curagh*, "a small boat made by covering a wicker frame with hide, leather, oilcloth, or the like" (see Dictionary under *coracle*).

MAURYA. There does be a power of young men floating round in the sea, and what way would they know if it was Michael they had, or another man like him, for when a man is nine days in the sea, and the wind blowing, it's hard set
5 his own mother would be to say what man was it.

CATHLEEN. It's Michael, God spare him, for they're after sending us a bit of his clothes from the far north.

[*She reaches out and hands MAURYA the clothes that belonged to MICHAEL. MAURYA stands up slowly, and takes them in her hands. NORA looks out.*]

NORA. They're carrying a thing among them and there's water dripping out of it and leaving a track by the big
10 stones.

CATHLEEN [*in a whisper to the women who have come in*]. Is it Bartley it is?

ONE OF THE WOMEN. It is surely, God rest his soul.

[*Two younger women come in and pull out the table. Then men carry in the body of BARTLEY, laid on a plank, with a bit of sail over it, and lay it on the table.*]

CATHLEEN [*to the women, as they are doing so*]. What
15 way was he drowned?

ONE OF THE WOMEN. The gray pony knocked him into the sea, and he was washed out where there is a great surf on the white rocks.

[*MAURYA has gone over and knelt down at the head of the table. The women are keening softly and swaying themselves with a slow movement. CATHLEEN and NORA kneel at the other end of the table. The men kneel near the door.*]

MAURYA [*raising her head and speaking as if she did not*
20 *see the people around her*]. They're all gone now, and there isn't anything more the sea can do to me. . . . I'll have no call now to be up crying and praying when the wind breaks from the south, and you can hear the surf is in

the east, and the surf is in the west, making a great stir with the two noises, and they hitting one on the other. I'll have no call now to be going down and getting Holy Water in the dark nights after Samhain, and I won't care what way the sea is when the other women will be keening. [To 5 NORA.] Give me the Holy Water, Nora; there's a small sup still on the dresser. [NORA gives it to her. MAURYA drops MICHAEL'S clothes across BARTLEY'S feet, and sprinkles the Holy Water over him.] It isn't that I haven't prayed for you, Bartley, to the Almighty God. It isn't that I haven't 10 said prayers in the dark night till you wouldn't know what I'd be saying; but it's a great rest I'll have now, and it's time surely. It's a great rest I'll have now, and great sleeping in the long nights after Samhain, if it's only a bit of wet flour we do have to eat, and maybe a fish that would 15 be stinking. [She kneels down again, crossing herself, and saying prayers under her breath.]

CATHLEEN [to an old man]. Maybe yourself and Eamon would make a coffin when the sun rises. We have fine white boards herself bought, God help her, thinking Michael 20 would be found, and I have a new cake you can eat while you'll be working.

THE OLD MAN [looking at the boards]. Are there nails with them?

CATHLEEN. There are not, Colum; we didn't think of the 25 nails.

ANOTHER MAN. It's a great wonder she wouldn't think of the nails, and all the coffins she's seen made already.

CATHLEEN. It's getting old she is, and broken.

[MAURYA stands up again very slowly and spreads out the

4. *Samhain*, an old Celtic feast held on November 1, the beginning of the Celtic year, to the departing summer. At the Samhain prophecies of the future were made, and the feasters believed that the air was full of spirits and goblins.

pieces of MICHAEL'S clothes beside the body, sprinkling them with the last of the Holy Water.]

NORA [*in a whisper to CATHLEEN*]. She's quiet now and easy; but the day Michael was drowned you could hear her crying out from this to the spring well. It's fonder she was of Michael, and would anyone have thought that?

5 CATHLEEN [*slowly and clearly*]. An old woman will be soon tired with anything she will do, and isn't it nine days herself is after crying and keening, and making great sorrow in the house?

MAURYA [*puts the empty cup mouth downwards on the table,*
10 *and lays her hands together on BARTLEY'S feet*]. They're all together this time, and the end is come. May the Almighty God have mercy on Bartley's soul, and on Michael's soul, and on the souls of Sheamus and Patch, and Stephen and Shawn [*bending her head*]; and may He have mercy on my
15 soul, Nora, and on the soul of everyone is left living in the world. [*She pauses, and the keen rises a little more loudly from the women, then sinks away.* MAURYA *continuing*:] Michael has a clean burial in the far north, by the grace of the Almighty God. Bartley will have a fine coffin out of
20 the white boards, and a deep grave surely. What more can we want than that? No man at all can be living forever, and we must be satisfied.

[*She kneels down again and the curtain falls slowly.*]

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the essential differences between this play and the full-length plays in this text?
2. Outline or develop the situation of *Riders to the Sea* as material for a sketch or short story.
3. There is comparatively little action or conflict in the usual sense in this play. What makes it essentially tragedy?
4. Aristotle, a Greek critic of the drama of his day, states that great tragedy should arouse in the spectators emotions of pity and fear. Discuss *Riders to the Sea* from this point of view.
5. Summarize details which foreshadow the tragedy as inevitable: i. e., Maurya's feeling that Bartley will not return.
6. What impression does Synge give you as to the type of person Maurya is?
7. What is the prevailing mood of the play?
8. How do the stage setting and the stage directions help to intensify this mood?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Folk elements in the play.
2. Compare this play with *Off Nag's Head* (by Dougald MacMillan), one of the *Carolina Folk Plays*, as to use of folk material.
3. Compare as to general situation with the more highly developed story, *The Iceland Fisherman*, by Pierre Loti.
4. Comparison and contrast of setting with certain scenes in Bojer's *The Last of the Vikings*.
5. Discussion of material in *The Aran Islands* as revealing something of the folk that Synge came to know there and that he characterized in his plays.

THE WORKHOUSE WARD

(1908)

BY

LADY GREGORY

The Workhouse Ward, from *Seven Short Plays*, copyright 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1909, is here reprinted by special permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York City, publishers of Lady Gregory's works in the United States. All rights reserved. For permission to perform, or read in public, address the publishers.

INTRODUCTION TO *THE WORKHOUSE WARD*

LADY GREGORY (1859-)

Lady Gregory, whose maiden name was Isabella Augusta Persse, was born at Roxborough, County Galway, Ireland, in 1859. She holds a place in the Celtic Renaissance because of her activities in collecting the heroic sagas and contemporary folk tales of her country and in organizing the Irish Theatre. To her and to William Butler Yeats we are most deeply indebted for popularizing the Irish saga-romance material, which corresponds to the Greek and Roman heroic tales and to the Arthurian cycle. To mention some of her outstanding work in this field: she has popularized in modern Irish-English dialect the story of Cuchulain (Cu-hu-lan), the legendary hero of one of the romance cycles of her country (*Cuchulain of Muirthemne*), and of Deirdre, who has been called the "Helen of Ireland." For her folk plays she secured material, as did Synge, by mingling with the peasants. It was in this manner that she first met Synge:

I first saw Synge in the North Island of Aran. I was staying there, gathering folklore, talking to the people, and felt quite angry when I passed another outsider walking here and there, talking also to the people. I was jealous of not being alone on the Island among the fishers and seaweed gatherers. I did not speak to the stranger, nor was he inclined to speak to me. He also looked on me as an intruder. I heard only his name. But a little later in the summer Mr. Yeats, who was staying with us at Coole, had a note from Synge, saying he was in Aran. (*Our Irish Theatre*, pages 120-121.)

After a most delightful dedication of *Our Irish Theatre* to her little grandson, Richard Gregory, she records with pleasing modesty her work as leader and organizer in the revival of Irish drama. Here she tells the story from the initial conversation with Yeats up to the international suc-

cess of The Abbey Theatre players: how she collected funds, secured friends and supporters, overcame legal difficulties with England for establishing the theatre, discovered and encouraged new dramatists, persisted in the project despite the bitter opposition of some of her fellow-countrymen, wrote plays herself, opposed the English authorities upon occasion, and successfully toured America with her Irish actors. In her last chapter she gives her impression of America and the people she met here.

Probably more than any other one individual she is responsible for the wide popularity of the one-act *genre* play of the folk, the drama of single incident, of simple situation, and of little or no complication. In this connection, her story of the genesis of *The Workhouse Ward*, first called *The Poorhouse*, is of much interest and significance:

As to *The Poorhouse*, the idea came from a visit to Gort Workhouse one day when I heard that the wife of an old man who had been long there, maimed by something, a knife I think, that she had thrown at him in a quarrel, had herself now been brought in to the hospital. I wondered how they would meet, as enemies or as friends, and I thought it likely they would be glad to end their days together for old sake's sake. This is how I wrote down the fable: "Scene, ward of a workhouse; two beds containing the old men; they are quarreling. Occupants of other invisible beds are heard saying, 'There they are at it again; they are always quarreling.' They say the matron will be coming for to call for order, but another says the matron has been sent for to see somebody who wants to remove one of the paupers. Both old men wish they could be removed from each other and have the whole ridge of the world between them. The fight goes on. One old man tells the other that he remembers the time he used to be stealing ducks and he a boy at school. The other old man remembers the time his neighbor was suspected of going to Souper's school, etc., etc. They remember the crimes of each other's lives. They fight like two young whelps that go on fighting till they are two old dogs. At last they take their pillows and throw them at each other. Other paupers (invisible) cheer and applaud. Then they take their porringers, pipes, prayer-books, or whatever is in reach, to hurl at each other. They

lament the hard fate that has put them in the same ward for five years and in beds next each other for the last three months, and they after being enemies the whole of their lives. Suddenly a cry that the matron is coming. They settle themselves hurriedly. Each puts his enemy's pillow under his head and lies down. The matron comes in with a countrywoman comfortably dressed. She embraces one old man. She is his sister. Her husband died from her lately and she is lonesome and doesn't like to think of her brother being in the workhouse. If he is bedridden itself, he would be company for her. He is delighted, asks what sort of a house she has. She says, a good one, a nice kitchen, and he can be doing little jobs for her. He can be sitting in a chair beside the fire and stirring the stirabout for her and throwing a bit of food to the chickens when she is out in the field. He asks when he can go. She says she has the chance of a lift for him on a neighbor's cart. He can come at once. He says he will make no delay. A loud sob from the old man in the other bed. He says, 'Is it going away you are, you that I knew through all my lifetime, and leaving me among strangers?' The first old man asks his sister if she will bring him too. She is indignant, says she won't. First old man says maybe he'd be foolish to go at all. How does he know if he'd like it. She says, he is to please himself; if he doesn't come, she can easily get a husband, having, as she has, a nice way of living, and three lambs going to the next market. The first man says, well, he won't go; if she would bring the other man, he would go. She turns her back angrily. Paupers in other beds call out she'll find a good husband amongst them. She pulls on her shawl scornfully to go away. She gives her brother one more chance; he says he won't go. She says goodby and bad luck to him. She leaves. He says that man beyond would be lonesome with no one to contradict him. The other man says he would not. The first man says, 'You want someone to be arguing with you always.' The first man says, 'You are at your lies again.' The second takes up his pillow to heave at him again. Curtain falls on the two men arming themselves with pillows." (*Our Irish Theatre*, pages 86-89.)

After trying unsuccessfully to collaborate with Dr. Hyde in dramatizing this situation, she rewrote their efforts as *The Workhouse Ward*:

I had more skill by that time, and it was a complete rewriting, for the two old men in the first play had been talking at an imaginary audience of other old men in the ward. When this was done away with, the dialogue became of necessity more closely knit, more direct and personal, to the great advantage of the play, although it was rejected as "too local" by the players for whom I had written it. (*Our Irish Theatre*, page 90.)

Relative to the comment of her players, she tells with great relish that during her visit to America she found *The Workhouse Ward* her most popular play in this country.

Lady Gregory's connection with the Celtic Renaissance has already been discussed on pages 222-223. To refresh his memory on the points made there, the student might reread those pages. A reading list for Lady Gregory appears on pages 263-264.

TEXT OF THE PLAY

PERSONS

MIKE McINERNEY } *Paupers*
MICHAEL MISKELL }
MRS. DONOHUE, *A Countrywoman*

First performed at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, April 20, 1908.

THE WORKHOUSE WARD*

SCENE. *A ward in Cloon Workhouse. The two old men in their beds.*

MICHAEL MISKELL. Isn't it a hard case, Mike McInerney, myself and yourself to be left here in the bed, and it the feast day of Saint Colman, and the rest of the ward attending on the Mass?

MIKE MCINERNEY. Is it sitting up by the hearth you are wishful to be, Michael Miskell, with cold in the shoulders and with speckled shins? Let you rise up so, and you well able to do it, not like myself that has pains the same as tin-tacks within in my inside.

MICHAEL MISKELL. If you have pains within in your inside there is no one can see it or know of it the way they can see my own knees that are swelled up with the rheumatism, and my hands that are twisted in ridges the same as an old cabbage stalk. It is easy to be talking about soreness and about pains, and they maybe not to be in it at all.

MIKE MCINERNEY. To open me and to analyze me you would know what sort of a pain and a soreness I have in my heart and in my chest. But I'm not one like yourself to be cursing and praying and tormenting the time the nuns are at hand, thinking to get a bigger share than myself of the nourishment and of the milk.

MICHAEL MISKELL. That's the way you do be picking at me and faulting me. I had a share and a good share in

*Copyright, 1909, by Lady Gregory. All rights reserved.

Title. *Workhouse*, poorhouse.

3 *Saint Colman*, an Irish saint (circa 522-600). He became a Christian about 570 A. D.

23. *faulting*, finding fault with.

my early time, and it's well you know that, and the both of us reared in Skehanagh.

MIKE McINERNEY. You may say that, indeed, we are both of us reared in Skehanagh. Little wonder you to have
5 good nourishment the time we were both rising, and you bringing away my rabbits out of the snare.

MICHAEL MISKELL. And you didn't bring away my own eels, I suppose, I was after spearing in the Turlough? Selling them to the nuns in the convent you did, and letting
10 on they to be your own. For you were always a cheater and a schemer, grabbing every earthly thing for your own profit.

MIKE McINERNEY. And you were no grabber yourself, I suppose, till your land and all you had grabbed wore away
15 from you!

MICHAEL MISKELL. If I lost it itself, it was through the crosses I met with and I going through the world. I never was a Rambler and a card-player like yourself, Mike McInerney, that ran through all and lavished it unknown to
20 your mother!

MIKE McINERNEY. Lavished it, is it? And if I did, was it you yourself led me to lavish it or some other one? It is on my own floor I would be today and in the face of my family, but for the misfortune I had to be put with a bad
25 next door neighbor that was yourself. What way did my means go from me is it? Spending on fencing, spending on walls, making up gates, putting up doors, that would keep your hens and your ducks from coming in through starvation on my floor, and every four-footed beast you had from prey-
30 ing and trespassing on my oats and my mangolds and my little lock of hay!

MICHAEL MISKELL. O to listen to you! And I striving to please you and to be kind to you and to close my ears to

30. *mangolds*, mangels, or beets.

the abuse you would be calling and letting out of your mouth. To trespass on your crops is it? It's little temptation there was for my poor beasts to ask to cross the mering. My God Almighty! What had you but a little corner of a field!

5

MIKE McINERNEY. And what do you say to my garden that your two pigs had destroyed on me the year of the big tree being knocked, and they making gaps in the wall?

MICHAEL MISKELL. Ah, there does be a great deal of gaps knocked in a twelvemonth. Why wouldn't they be 10 knocked by the thunder, the same as the tree, or some storm that came up from the west?

MIKE McINERNEY. It was the west wind, I suppose, that devoured my green cabbage? And that rooted up my Champion potatoes? And that ate the gooseberries them- 15 selves from off the bush?

MICHAEL MISKELL. What are you saying? The two quietest pigs ever I had, no way wicked and well ringed. They were not ten minutes in it. It would be hard for them eat strawberries in that time, let alone gooseberries that's 20 full of thorns.

MIKE McINERNEY. They were not quiet, but very ravenous pigs you had that time, as active as a fox they were, killing my young ducks. Once they had blood tasted you couldn't stop them.

25

MICHAEL MISKELL. And what happened myself the fair day of Esserkelly, the time I was passing your door? Two brazened dogs that rushed out and took a piece of me. I never was the better of it or of the start I got, but wasting from then till now!

30

MIKE McINERNEY. Thinking you were a wild beast they did, that had made his escape out of the traveling show, with

3. *mering*, a furrow serving as a dividing line in a common field.

18. *ringed*, having nose-rings, to prevent their uprooting the ground.

20. *fair day*, day set aside once a month for a community fair.

the red eyes of you and the ugly face of you, and the two crooked legs of you that wouldn't hardly stop a pig in a gap. Sure any dog that had any life in it at all would be roused and stirred seeing the like of you going the road!

5 MICHAEL MISKELL. I did well taking out a summons against you that time. It is a great wonder you not to have been bound over through your lifetime, but the laws of England is queer.

MIKE MCINERNEY. What ailed me that I did not sum-
10 mons yourself after you stealing away the clutch of eggs I had in the barrel, and I away in Ardrahan searching out a clocking hen.

MICHAEL MISKELL. To steal your eggs is it? Is that what you are saying now? [*Holds up his hands.*] The Lord
15 is in heaven, and Peter and the saints, and yourself that was in Ardrahan that day put a hand on them as soon as myself! Isn't it a bad story for me to be wearing out my days beside you the same as a spanceled goat. Chained I am and tethered I am to a man that is ramsacking his mind
20 for lies!

MIKE MCINERNEY. If it is a bad story for you, Michael Miskell, it is a worse story again for myself. A Miskell to be next and near me through the whole of the four quarters of the year. I never heard there to be any great name on
25 the Miskells as there was on my own race and name.

MICHAEL MISKELL. You didn't, is it? Well, you could hear it if you had but ears to hear it. Go across to Lisheen Crannagh and down to the sea and to Newtown Lynch and the mills of Duras and you'll find a Miskell, and as far as
30 Dublin!

MIKE MCINERNEY. What signifies Crannagh and the mills of Duras? Look at all my own generations that are

10. *clutch of eggs*, nest of eggs for setting.

12. *clocking*, setting.

18. *spanceled*, tied with a rope.

buried at the Seven Churches. And how many generations of the Miskells are buried in it? Answer me that!

MICHAEL MISKELL. I tell you but for the wheat that was to be sowed there would be more side cars and more common cars at my father's funeral (God rest his soul!) 5 than at any funeral ever left your own door. And as to my mother, she was a Cuffe from Claregalway, and it's she had the purer blood!

MIKE McINERNEY. And what do you say to the banshee? Isn't she apt to have knowledge of the ancient race? Was 10 ever she heard to screech or to cry for the Miskells? Or for the Cuffes from Claregalway? She was not, but for the six families, the Hyneses, the Foxes, the Faheys, the Dooleys, the McInerneys. It is of the nature of the McInerneys she is I am thinking, crying them the same as a king's 15 children.

MICHAEL MISKELL. It is a pity the banshee not to be crying for yourself at this minute, and giving you a warning to quit your lies and your chat and your arguing and your 20 contrary ways; for there is no one under the rising sun could stand you. I tell you you are not behaving as in the presence of the Lord!

MIKE McINERNEY. Is it wishful for my death you are? Let it come and meet me now and welcome so long as it will part me from yourself! And I say, and I would kiss the 25 Book on it, I to have one request only to be granted, and I leaving it in my will, it is what I would request, nine furrows of the field, nine ridges of the hills, nine waves of the ocean to be put between your grave and my own grave the time we will be laid in the ground! 30

MICHAEL MISKELL. Amen to that! Nine ridges, is it? No, but let the whole ridge of the world separate us till the

9. *banshee*, in Celtic folklore, a being with supernatural powers who is supposed to warn a family of the approaching death of one of its members.

15. *crying them*, publicly announcing their births.

Day of Judgment! I would not be laid anear you at the Seven Churches, I to get Ireland without a divide!

MIKE McINERNEY. And after that again! I'd sooner than ten pound in my hand, I to know that my shadow and
5 my ghost will not be knocking about with your shadow and your ghost, and the both of us waiting our time. I'd sooner be delayed in Purgatory! Now, have you anything to say?

MICHAEL MISKELL. I have everything to say, if I had but the time to say it!

10 MIKE McINERNEY [*sitting up*]. Let me up out of this till I'll choke you!

MICHAEL MISKELL. You scolding pauper, you!

MIKE McINERNEY [*shaking his fist at him*]. Wait a while!

MICHAEL MISKELL [*shaking his fist*]. Wait a while your-
15 self!

[*MRS. DONOHUE comes in with a parcel. She is a country-woman with a frilled cap and a shawl. She stands still a minute. The two old men lie down and compose themselves.*]

MRS. DONOHUE. They bade me come up here by the stair. I never was in this place at all. I don't know am I right. Which now of the two of ye is Mike McInerney?

MIKE McINERNEY. Who is it is calling me by my name?

20 MRS. DONOHUE. Sure amn't I your sister, Honor McInerney that was, that is now Honor Donohoe.

MIKE McINERNEY. So you are, I believe. I didn't know you till you pushed anear me. It is time indeed for you to come see me, and I in this place five year or more. Thinking
25 me to be no credit to you, I suppose, among that tribe of the Donohoes. I wonder they to give you leave to come ask am I living yet or dead.

MRS. DONOHUE. Ah, sure, I buried the whole string of them. Himself was the last to go. [*Wipes her eyes.*] The
30 Lord be praised he got a fine natural death. Sure we must

go through our crosses. And he got a lovely funeral; it would delight you to hear the priest reading the Mass. My poor John Donohoe! A nice clean man, you couldn't but be fond of him. Very severe on the tobacco he was, but he wouldn't touch the drink.

5

MIKE MCINERNEY. And is it in Curranroe you are living yet?

MRS. DONOHOE. It is so. He left all to myself. But it is a lonesome thing the head of a house to have died!

MIKE MCINERNEY. I hope that he has left you a nice 10 way of living?

MRS. DONOHOE. Fair enough, fair enough. A wide lovely house I have; a few acres of grass land . . . the grass does be very sweet that grows among the stones. And as to the sea, there is something from it every day of the year, a 15 handful of periwinkles to make kitchen, or cockles maybe. There is many a thing in the sea is not decent, but cockles is fit to put before the Lord!

MIKE MCINERNEY. You have all that! And you without ere a man in the house?

20

MRS. DONOHOE. It is what I am thinking, yourself might come and keep me company. It is no credit to me a brother of my own to be in this place at all.

MIKE MCINERNEY. I'll go with you! Let me out of this! It is the name of the McInerneys will be rising on 25 every side!

MRS. DONOHOE. I don't know. I was ignorant of you being kept to the bed.

MIKE MCINERNEY. I am not kept to it but maybe an odd time when there is a colic rises up within me. My 30 stomach always gets better the time there is a change in the moon. I'd like well to draw anear you. My heavy

16. *periwinkles*, shellfish; *make kitchen*, be used for seasoning, *cockles*, edible mollusks.

blessing on you, Honor Donohoe, for the hand you have held out to me this day.

MRS. DONOHOE. Sure you could be keeping the fire in, and stirring the pot with the bit of Indian meal for the
5 hens, and milking the goat and taking the tacklings off the donkey at the door; and maybe putting out the cabbage plants in their time. For when the old man died the garden died.

MIKE MCINERNEY. I could, to be sure, and be cutting
10 the potatoes for seed. What luck could there be in a place and a man not to be in it? Is that now a suit of clothes you have brought with you?

MRS. DONOHOE. It is so, the way you will be tasty coming in among the neighbors at Curranroe.

15 MIKE MCINERNEY. My joy you are! It is well you earned me! Let me up out of this! [*He sits up and spreads out the clothes and tries on coat.*] That now is a good frieze coat . . . and a hat in the fashion . . . [*He puts on hat.*]

20 MICHAEL MISKELL [*alarmed*]. And is it going out of this you are, Mike McInerney?

MIKE MCINERNEY. Don't you hear I am going? To Curranroe I am going. Going I am to a place where I will get every good thing!

25 MICHAEL MISKELL. And is it to leave me here after you you will?

MIKE MCINERNEY [*in a rising chant*]. Every good thing! The goat and the kid are there, the sheep and the lamb are there, the cow does be running and she coming to be milked!
30 Plowing and seed sowing, blossom at Christinas time, the cuckoo speaking through the dark days of the year! Ah, what are you talking about? Wheat high in hedges, no talk about the rent! Salmon in the rivers as plenty as turf!

Spending and getting and nothing scarce! Sport and pleasure, and music on the strings! Age will go from me and I will be young again. Geese and turkeys for the hundreds and drink for the whole world!

MICHAEL MISKELL. Ah, Mike, is it truth you are saying, you to go from me and to leave me with rude people and with townspeople, and with people of every parish in the union, and they having no respect for me or no wish for me at all!

MIKE MCINERNEY. Whist now and I'll leave you . . . 10 my pipe [*hands it over*]; and I'll engage it is Honor Donohoe won't refuse to be sending you a few ounces of tobacco an odd time, and neighbors coming to the fair in November or in the month of May.

MICHAEL MISKELL. Ah, what signifies tobacco? All that 15 I am craving is the talk. There to be no one at all to say out to whatever thought might be rising in my innate mind! To be lying here and no conversible person in it would be the abomination of misery!

MIKE MCINERNEY. Look now, Honor. . . . It is what I 20 often heard said, two to be better than one. . . . Sure if you had an old trouser was full of holes . . . or a skirt . . . wouldn't you put another in under it that might be as tattered as itself, and the two of them together would make some sort of a decent show? 25

MRS. DONOHOE. Ah, what are you saying? There is no holes in that suit I brought you now, but as sound it is as the day I spun it for himself.

MIKE MCINERNEY. It is what I am thinking, Honor . . . I do be weak an odd time . . . any load I would 30 carry it preys upon my side . . . and this man does be weak an odd time with the swelling in his knees . . . but the two of us together it's not likely it is at the one time we would fail. Bring the both of us with you, Honor, and the

height of the castle of luck on you, and the both of us together will make one good hardy man!

MRS. DONOHUE. I'd like my job! Is it queer in the head you are grown asking me to bring in a stranger off the road?

5 MICHAEL MISKELL. I am not, ma'am, but an old neighbor I am. If I had forecasted this asking I would have asked it myself. Michael Miskell I am, that was in 'the next house to you in Skehanagh!

MRS. DONOHUE. For pity's sake! Michael Miskell is it?
10 That's worse again. Yourself and Mike that never left fighting and scolding and attacking one another! Sparring at one another like two young pups you were, and threatening one another after like two grown dogs!

MIKE MCINERNEY. All the quarreling was ever in the
15 place it was myself did it. Sure his anger rises fast and goes away like the wind. Bring him out with myself now, Honor Donohue, and God bless you.

MRS. DONOHUE. Well, then, I will not bring him out, and I will not bring yourself out, and you not to learn better
20 sense. Are you making yourself ready to come?

MIKE MCINERNEY. I am thinking, maybe . . . it is a mean thing for a man that is shivering into seventy years to go changing from place to place.

MRS. DONOHUE. Well, take your luck or leave it. All I
25 asked was to save you from the hurt and the harm of the year.

MIKE MCINERNEY. Bring the both of us with you or I will not stir out of this.

MRS. DONOHUE. Give me back my fine suit so [*begins*
30 *gathering up the clothes*], till I'll go look for a man of my own!

MIKE MCINERNEY. Let you go so, as you are so unnatural and so disobliging, and look for some man of your own, God help him! For I will not go with you at all!

MRS. DONOHOE. It is too much time I lost with you, and dark night waiting to overtake me on the road. Let the two of you stop together, and the back of my hand to you. It is I will leave you there the same as God left the Jews!

[*She goes out. The old men lie down and are silent for a moment.*]

MICHAEL MISKELL. Maybe the house is not so wide as 5 what she says.

MIKE McINERNEY. Why wouldn't it be wide?

MICHAEL MISKELL. Ah, there does be a good deal of middling poor houses down by the sea.

MIKE McINERNEY. What would you know about wide 10 houses? Whatever sort of a house you had yourself it was too wide for the provision you had into it.

MICHAEL MISKELL. Whatever provision I had in my house it was wholesome provision and natural provision. Herself and her periwinkles! Periwinkles is a hungry sort 15 of food.

MIKE McINERNEY. Stop your impudence and your chat or it will be the worse for you. I'd bear with my own father and mother as long as any man would, but if they'd vex me I would give them the length of a rope as soon as 20 another!

MICHAEL MISKELL. I would never ask at all to go eating periwinkles.

MIKE McINERNEY [*sitting up*]. Have you anyone to fight 25 me?

MICHAEL MISKELL [*whimpering*]. I have not, only the Lord!

MIKE McINERNEY. Let you leave putting insults on me ' so, and death picking at you!

MICHAEL MISKELL. Sure I am saying nothing at all to 30 displease you. It is why I wouldn't go eating periwinkles, I'm in dread I might swallow the pin.

MIKE McINERNEY. Who in the world wide is asking you to eat them? You're as tricky as a fish in the full tide!

MICHAEL MISKELL. Tricky is it! Oh, my curse and the curse of the four and twenty men upon you!

5 MIKE McINERNEY. That the worm may chew you from skin to marrow bone! [*Seizes his pillow.*]

MICHAEL MISKELL [*seizing his own pillow*]. I'll leave my death on you, you scheming bagabone!

10 MIKE McINERNEY. By cripes! I'll pull out your pin feathers! [*Throwing pillow*].

MICHAEL MISKELL [*throwing pillow*]. You tyrant! You big bully you!

MIKE McINERNEY [*throwing pillow and seizing mug*]. Take this so, you stobbing ruffian you!

[*They throw all within their reach at one another, mugs, prayer books, pipes, etc.*]

CURTAIN

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. Compare this play as to use of material, dramatic scenes, and characterization with Lady Gregory's account of the situation from which she developed it (see introductory notes to the play, pages 243-246).

2. What characteristic of the Irish people does Lady Gregory satirize here? Discuss in relation to the play.

3. Farce has been called "the comedy of the ludicrous." Discuss this play as farce.

4. Wherein is *The Workhouse Ward* different as to construction from the full-length play?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Compare this play with *Dod Gast Ye Both* (by Hubert Heffner), in the *Carolina Folk Plays*, as to characterization and use of folk elements.
2. Discuss the folk elements in this play.
3. Take a serious or comic situation in your own community with which you are familiar and sketch it as a scenario or as an outline for a story. If possible, dramatize it.

THE CELTIC RENAISSANCE AND IRISH DRAMA

I. BACKGROUND

- E. A. Boyd, *Contemporary Drama of Ireland* (Little, Brown and Company, 1917). The only comprehensive survey of modern Irish drama.
- Douglas Hyde, *A Literary History of Ireland* (Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1899). A standard work by the literary leader in the Renaissance.
- Lloyd R. Morris, *Celtic Dawn, A Survey of the Renascence in Ireland* (1889-1916) (The Macmillan Co., 1917). The bibliography on this subject is very large, but Mr. Morris presents the material adequately for the average reader. He considers briefly and clearly the varied aspects of the Renaissance—economic, social, linguistic, and literary.
- Cornelius Weygandt, *Irish Plays and Playwrights* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913). Material interesting, but not a comprehensive treatment.

II. SUGGESTED READINGS FROM IRISH DRAMATISTS

- Padraic Colum, *The Land*, a play treating of agricultural conditions in Ireland and of the tendency of the young people to come to America. *Thomas Muskerry*, the tragedy of the master of the workhouse in a small Irish town. *The Fiddler's House*, the tale of an old fiddler who cannot give up his wandering life, and of his two daughters.

Lord Dunsany, *Five Plays: The Gods of the Mountain, The Golden Doom, King Argimenes and the Unknown Warrior, The Glittering Gate, The Lost Silk Hat*. With the exception of the last, a laughable farce, these plays are of the "other world" of Lord Dunsany's own creation. *Plays of Gods and Men: The Tents of the Arabs, The Laughter of the Gods, The Queen's Enemies, A Night at an Inn*.

St. John Ervine, *Mixed Marriage, The Orangemen, John Ferguson*. These three plays all treat of various serious aspects of the life of the people of Ulster.

Lennox Robinson, *The Whiteheaded Boy*. A refined type of the *Playboy*.

W. B. Yeats, *The Hour Glass*, a modern morality of the wise man and the fool; *The Land of Heart's Desire*, a beautiful, poetic bit of fairy lore; *Cathleen Ni Hoolihan*—when Ireland, the beautiful mistress, calls, the young men of Ireland follow her; *Deirdre*, a dramatization of the story of "Helen of Ireland."

JOHN M. SYNGE AND LADY GREGORY

Synge

GENERAL:

Maurice Bourgeois, *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre* (Constable and Company, 1913). The standard biography of the Irish dramatist.

John M. Synge, *The Aran Islands* (John W. Luce, 1911). Synge's observations on his life among the peasants in the islands of the west coast of Ireland. Valuable—almost indispensable—to an understanding of Synge's plays.

PLAYS:

The Well of the Saints (1905). Desire of people to avoid being disillusioned.

The Playboy of the Western World (1907). Rollicking extravaganza. Romantic satire. Tendency of the Irish people to make a hero of a boaster.

The Tinker's Wedding (1909). Genre picture of the wayward, carefree life of the Irish gypsy group.

COLLATERAL READING:

Johan Bojer, *The Last of the Vikings*. A powerful story of the Norwegian fishermen of a generation ago. It contains some of the most vivid descriptions of the sea in any literature.

Frederick Koch, *Carolina Folk Plays* (Henry Holt and Company, 1923). Written by students of the University of North Carolina under the direction of Professor Koch. North Carolina is one of the richest districts in the United States for folklore material.

Pierre Loti, *The Iceland Fisherman* (translation of *Pêcheur d'Islande*). The author, a contemporary French writer, in this story tells of a Breton fisherman who leaves his sweetheart, goes off on a voyage to Iceland, and never returns. "The last part of the book describes the waiting and mourning of the woman left behind. Two of Loti's chief obsessions, the changeable devouring sea and the all-pervasive thought of death, are rendered with power and melancholy." Some critics think Synge was influenced in his *Riders to the Sea* by this story.

Lady Gregory

AUTOBIOGRAPHY:

Our Irish Theatre (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1913). Autobiographical account of the origin and development of the Irish players and the Irish Theatre. Her account of their tour of the United States should be of special interest to people in this country.

FOLKLORE AND LEGENDS:

Cuchulain of Muirthemne (1902). Saga romance.

Visions and Beliefs in the West of Ireland (1920). Folklore.

PLAYS:

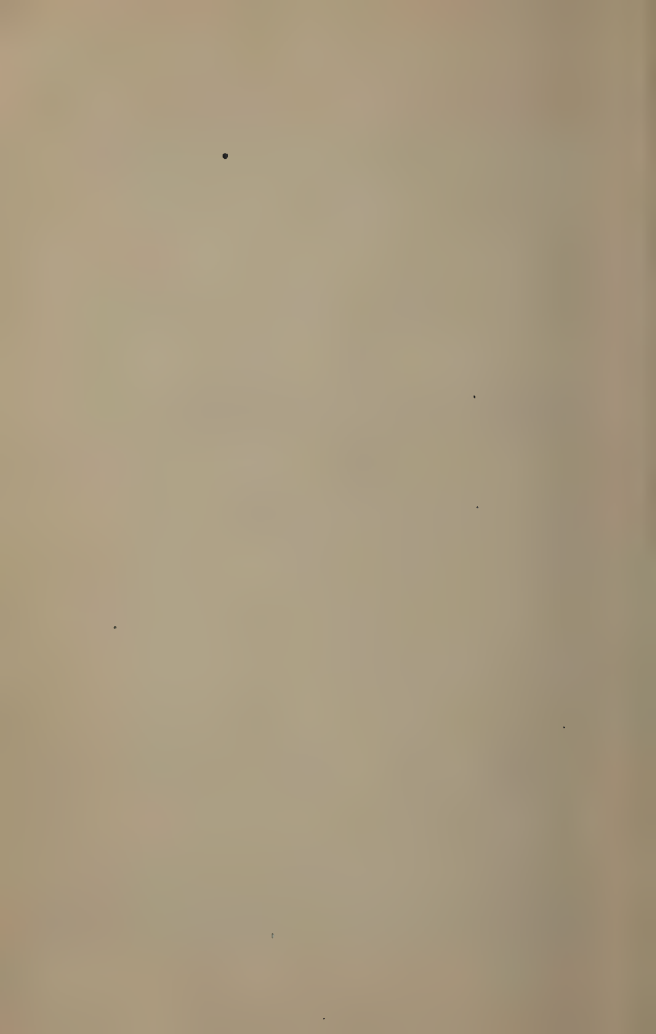
Irish Folk-History Plays (1912).

Seven Short Plays (1909): *Spreading the News*, *Hyacinth Halvey*, *The Rising of the Moon*, *The Jackdaw*, *The Workhouse Ward*, *The Travelling Man*, *The Gaol Gate*. This volume and the one entitled *New Comedies* (1913) contain the best of her contemporary folk-plays.

WHERE THE CROSS IS MADE
(1919)

BY
EUGENE O'NEILL

Where the Cross Is Made is reprinted from *The Moon of the Caribbees, and Other Plays of the Sea* by permission of the author and of the publishers, Boni and Liveright, New York. For permission to perform apply to the publishers.



INTRODUCTION TO *WHERE THE CROSS IS MADE*

I. EUGENE O'NEILL, (1888-)

Eugene O'Neill, the most significant American playwright, has a definite relation to all phases of the American drama, to be reviewed in the following section. By inheritance and tradition he knows the commercial theatre, by special training he acknowledges indebtedness to the university group, and by present connection he is part of the little-theatre movement. Like T. W. Robertson, author of *Caste*, he was "cradled in properties," for his father, James O'Neill, was touring this country in *The Count of Monte Cristo* at the time of his son's birth. During the next seven years O'Neill's home was wherever his father's company happened to be playing. Then a few years ago, after he had decided to turn to playwriting, he became a member of Professor Baker's class in dramatic production and composition. And at the present time he is one of the Provincetown Players. Furthermore, by ancestry he may claim connection with the Celtic Renaissance, for his father was born in Ireland and spent his early years there. And although externally the relationship is only coincidental, essentially Eugene O'Neill in certain respects has a distinct kinship with John M. Synge, the Irish dramatist. Both spent many years in nomadic life, and both found material for their best plays in the elemental and the primitive among the unsophisticated people they came to know.

Eugene O'Neill was born October 16, 1888. At the age of seven years he was sent to a Catholic boarding school. Later at Betts Academy, Stamford, Conn., he prepared for Princeton University, where he remained one year. Then followed several years of adventurous and wandering life. First he was off with a prospector for gold to Spanish Honduras, from which place he was sent home with malarial

fever. Then, after some months of touring with a dramatic company in the United States, he shipped as a common sailor from Boston to Buenos Aires. A third adventure was a trip to South Africa on a cattle boat. Back to New York by the same route, he closed this chapter of his experiences by a trip across the Atlantic and back as an "able seaman." During these wanderings in South America, along the wharves, and on shipboard, he was becoming familiar with the life and the people represented later in the situations and characters of his plays. The remainder of his story may be briefly told. After again touring with his father, and serving for a short time as a newspaper reporter, he had to spend six months in a sanatorium because of threatened tuberculosis. Here he decided that he wanted most of all to write. Then followed the year at Harvard, a period of apprenticeship with his manuscripts returned unread by managers, his recognition as a dramatist first by Mencken, who printed three of his plays in *The Smart Set*, a winter in Greenwich Village, New York, his connection with the Provincetown Players, and his present recognition as the leading American dramatist.

O'Neill is one of the international school of contemporary dramatists who attempt to present with fidelity the aspects of life and the characters selected for their plays. But O'Neill at his best is more than an exponent of a current fashion in literature. He represents something of the permanent and universal. He is akin to the Greeks and the Elizabethans in what one critic has recently called "a sense of the strangeness of life," in an impatience with technique when it becomes a mere juggling of machinery to interest his audience, and in a power to make one feel the illusion of reality when he presents characters dominated by elemental passions or emotions. The obsessions of superstitious fear and terror in *The Emperor Jones*, of the intense futile struggle to find oneself in *The Hairy Ape*, and of a terrible, brutal and selfish tyranny and ambition in *Ile* have a certain essential and universal counterpart in the ambition of Macbeth, the jealousy of Othello, and the mad ravings of

.

Lear in the awful storm. This universality seems to represent his ideal in part:

People talk of the "tragedy" [in my plays], and call it "sordid," "depressing," "pessimistic"—the words usually applied to anything of a tragic nature. But tragedy, I think, has the meaning the Greeks gave it. To them it brought exaltation, an urge toward life and ever more life. It roused them to deeper spiritual understandings and released them from the petty greeds of everyday existence. When they saw a tragedy on the stage they felt their own hopeless hopes ennobled in art. . . . Any victory we *may* win is never the one we dreamed of winning. The point is that life in itself is nothing. It is the *dream* that keeps us fighting, willing—living. (Mary B. Mullett, *The Extraordinary Story of Eugene O'Neill*, *The American Magazine*, November, 1922.)

Where the Cross Is Made illustrates the attitude and point of view summarized in the preceding paragraph.

II. AMERICAN DRAMA—BACKGROUND FOR O'NEILL

The most intelligent approach to a view of modern American drama—from the time of Clyde Fitch to that of Eugene O'Neill—is through the theatre itself. During the first ten years of this century the presentation of plays in America was almost exclusively in the hands of two commercial monopolies: The Theatrical Syndicate and The Independent Movement. Having as their aim the highest dividends, the plays they produced were intended primarily as amusement for the tired business man and jaded or bored society people. Though good plays and actors of a high order persisted through these years, conditions were most unfavorable for maintaining a high artistic standard or for developing an American drama of permanent worth. The popular American dramatist of this period, Clyde Fitch, contemporary with the English playwright Pinero, is a writer of melodrama representing various aspects of New York "society" life. To the discriminating modern critic his plays at their worst are tawdry and at their best, artificial.

Though the commercial group is still powerful in the American theatre, other forces are at work for better drama. These forces are represented by critics and students of the drama, by social workers trying to develop a more wholesome recreational life in America, and by creative artists.

During the years 1900 to 1909 a group of intelligent theatre-goers organized to develop a national endowed theatre at which would be presented the best continental and American drama. In 1909, under the leadership of Winthrop Ames and the financial directorship of several wealthy men, the new theatre was opened with this policy. Though it failed through certain defects in the organization and general plan, it presented some notable plays and indicated a desire among the leaders for a change in the theatre.

Two movements, in some ways closely related, which have changed the attitude toward drama throughout the country and have raised the standard of dramatic art are the community theatre and the little theatre. Percy Mackaye (1875-), poet, playwright, and producer of community pageants, is the best known sponsor of "community drama." In *The Playhouse and the Play*, *The Civic Theatre*, and *The Community Drama* he pleads for dramatic entertainments which will inspire wholesome civic ideals, and for a drama the aim of which is intellectual or "creative" recreation. The nation-wide presentation of pageants and masques and community plays on themes varying from local to international interest is evidence of the activity of those interested in this movement. Both community drama and the little theatre have enlisted the active interest of social workers.

The term "little theatre" as it has come to be used in this technical sense is a small theatre in which amateur, semi-professional, or professional actors present plays judged by the directors to be of high artistic merit, plays which as a rule the commercial theatres would not accept. The "little theatre" movement is similar to that for "free theatres" in Paris, Berlin, and London, except that in those places the plays were intended only for private presentation, a special

membership ticket being necessary for admission. In this country, on the other hand, the little theatres are as a rule dependent on the public for their support. In this respect they are similar to the Irish Theatre.

The one-act play has become a literary fashion in this country along with the popularity of the little theatre, partially because of the simplicity of the type, the limitations of amateur actors, and the comparative ease with which material that the managers and directors desired could be cast into this mold. To be sure this fashion had already prevailed on the continent and the British Isles for some fifteen years.

Two notable examples of successful little theatres in social centers are the Hull House Players of Chicago and the Neighborhood Players in connection with the Henry Street Settlement of New York.

The pioneer little theatre as a professional enterprise, however, was initiated by Maurice Browne in Chicago in 1912. With the assistance of a few professional actors and several amateurs who served without pay, in a theatre seating ninety-one people, he produced plays by leading Irish, English, and Continental dramatists. Following this experiment little theatres have come into existence in many of the leading cities over the country. The most distinctive work, however, is that done by two or three groups of New York players. There immediately occurs to one the Washington Square Players, with their later development, The Theatre Guild, which has been producing some of the best plays in New York for the past three or four years, and which is raising the general standard of drama in the commercial theatres. And most distinctive of all are the Provincetown Players, a group of artists who for several years have written and produced plays for their own criticism at Provincetown on Cape Cod, and during winters have presented them to the public in New York in a little theatre remodeled from an old barn. This group is "devoted exclusively to the production of American plays." In this group are Susan Glaspell, accepted as an American dramatist of the first rank, and Eugene O'Neill, the author of special interest to us and

recognized as the leading contemporary American dramatist. Along with these groups, an organization which has done much during the last ten years to set a higher standard for plays in the commercial theatres and to foster amateur community drama is The Drama League of America.

Contemporary with the activity just summarized, greater interest in drama has developed in colleges and universities. For many years Professor G. P. Baker at Harvard University has conducted English 47, a class in the writing of plays.* Among successful dramatists who have been enrolled in this course are Lewis Beach, Edward Sheldon, and Eugene O'Neill. At the University of North Dakota first, and later at the University of North Carolina, Professor Frederick H. Koch, following in the footsteps of Lady Gregory and fellow workers, has conducted a class in dramatic composition especially for writing folk-plays.

During the years since the war not only the desire to see better drama but also the desire to see drama at all has impelled cities, towns, and communities outside of New York, Chicago, and a few other metropolitan centers to develop amateur groups and professional or semi-professional local stock companies; with the advance in railroad rates and the general increase in expenses, touring companies with first class plays and actors have almost passed out of existence.

*In 1925 Professor Baker accepted a call to Yale University to carry on the same line of the work there.

TEXT OF THE PLAY

CHARACTERS

CAPTAIN ISAIAH BARTLETT

NAT BARTLETT, *his son*

SUE BARTLETT, *his daughter*

DOCTOR HIGGINS

SILAS HORNE, *mate*

CATES, *bo'sun*

JIMMY KANAKA, *harpooner*

} *of the schooner Mary Allen*

WHERE THE CROSS IS MADE*

SCENE. Captain Bartlett's "cabin" —a room erected as a lookout post at the top of his house situated on a high point of land on the California coast. The inside of the compartment is fitted up like the captain's cabin of a deep-sea sailing vessel. On the left, forward, a porthole. Farther back, the stairs of the companionway. Still farther, two more portholes. In the rear, left, a marble-topped sideboard with a ship's lantern on it. In the rear, center, a door opening on stairs which lead to the lower house. A cot with a blanket is placed against the wall to the right of the door. In the right wall, five portholes. Directly under them, a wooden bench. In front of the bench, a long table with two straight-backed chairs, one in front, the other to the left of it. A cheap, dark-colored rug is on the floor. In the ceiling, midway from front to rear, a skylight extending from opposite the door to above the left edge of the table. In the right extremity of the skylight is placed a floating ship's compass. The light from the binnacle sheds over this from above and seeps down into the room, casting a vague globular shadow of the compass on the floor.

The time is an early hour of a clear windy night in the fall of the year 1900. Moonlight, winnowed by the wind which moans in the stubborn angles of the old house, creeps wearily in through the portholes and rests like tired dust in circular patches upon the floor and table. An insistent monotone of thundering surf, muffled and far-off, is borne upward from the beach below.

[After the curtain rises, the door in the rear is opened slowly and the head and shoulders of NAT BARTLETT appear over

*Copyright, 1919, by Boni & Liveright. All rights reserved.

the sill. He casts a quick glance about the room, and seeing no one there, ascends the remaining steps and enters. He makes a sign to someone in the darkness beneath: "All right, Doctor." DOCTOR HIGGINS follows him into the room and, closing the door, stands looking with great curiosity around him. He is a slight, medium-sized, professional-looking man of about thirty-five. NAT BARTLETT is very tall, gaunt, and loose-framed. His right arm has been amputated at the shoulder, and the sleeve on that side of the heavy mackinaw he wears hangs flabbily or flaps against his body as he moves. He appears much older than his thirty years. His shoulders have a weary stoop as if worn down by the burden of his massive head with its heavy shock of tangled black hair. His face is long, bony, and sallow, with deep-set black eyes, a large aquiline nose, a wide, thin-lipped mouth shadowed by an unkempt bristle of mustache. His voice is low and deep with a penetrating, hollow, metallic quality. In addition to the mackinaw, he wears corduroy trousers stuffed down into high laced boots.]

NAT. Can you see, Doctor?

HIGGINS [*in the too-casual tones which betray an inward uneasiness*]. Yes—perfectly—don't trouble. The moonlight is so bright——

5 NAT. Luckily. [*Walking slowly toward the table.*] He doesn't want any light—lately—only the one from the binnacle there.

HIGGINS. He? Ah—you mean your father?

NAT [*impatiently*]. Who else?

10 HIGGINS [*a bit startled—gazing around him in embarrassment*]. I suppose this is all meant to be like a ship's cabin?

NAT. Yes—as I warned you.

HIGGINS [*in surprise*]. Warned me? Why warned? I thinks it's very natural—and interesting—this whim of his.

NAT [*meaningly*]. Interesting, it may be.

HIGGINS. And he lives up here, you said—never comes down?

NAT. Never—for the past three years. My sister brings his food up to him. [*He sits down in the chair to the left of the table.*] There's a lantern on the sideboard there, Doctor. Bring it over and sit down. We'll make a light. I'll ask your pardon for bringing you to this room on the roof—but—no one'll hear us here; and by seeing for yourself the mad way he lives— Understand that I want you to get all the facts—just that, facts!—and for that light is necessary. Without that—they become dreams up here—dreams, Doctor. 10

HIGGINS [*with a relieved smile carries over the lantern*]. It is a trifle spooky.

NAT [*not seeming to notice this remark*]. He won't take any note of this light. His eyes are too busy—out there. [*He flings his left arm in a wide gesture seaward.*] And if he does notice—well, let him come down. You're bound to see him sooner or later. [*He scratches a match and lights the lantern.*] 15

HIGGINS. Where is—he? 20

NAT [*pointing upward*]. Up on the poop. Sit down, man! He'll not come—yet awhile.

HIGGINS [*sitting gingerly on the chair in front of table*]. Then he has the roof, too, rigged up like a ship?

NAT. I told you he had. Like a deck, yes. A wheel, compass, binnacle light, the companionway there [*he points*], a bridge to pace up and down on—and keep watch. If the wind wasn't so high you'd hear him now—back and forth—all the livelong night. [*With a sudden harshness.*] Didn't I tell you he's mad? 30

HIGGINS [*with a professional air*]. That was nothing new. I've heard that about him from all sides since I first came to the asylum yonder. You say he only walks at night—up there?

NAT. Only at night, yes. [*Grimly.*] The things he wants to see can't be made out in daylight—dreams and such.

HIGGINS. But just what is he trying to see? Does anyone know? Does he tell?

5 NAT [*impatiently*]. Why, everyone knows what Father looks for, man! The ship, of course.

HIGGINS. What ship?

NAT. His ship—the *Mary Allen*—named for my dead mother.

10 HIGGINS. But—I don't understand—— Is the ship long overdue—or what?

NAT. Lost in a hurricane off the Celebes with all on board—three years ago!

HIGGINS [*wonderingly*]. Ah! [*After a pause.*] But your
15 father still clings to a doubt——

NAT. There is no doubt for him or anyone else to cling to. She was sighted bottom up, a complete wreck, by the whaler *John Slocum*. That was two weeks after the storm. They sent a boat out to read her name.

20 HIGGINS. And hasn't your father ever heard——

NAT. He was the first to hear, naturally. Oh, he *knows* right enough, if that's what you're driving at. [*He bends toward the doctor—intensely.*] He *knows*, Doctor, he *knows*—but he won't *believe*. He can't—and keep living.

25 HIGGINS [*impatiently*]. Come, Mr. Bartlett, let's get down to brass tacks. You didn't drag me up here to make things more obscure, did you? Let's have the facts you spoke of. I'll need them to give sympathetic treatment to his case when we get him to the asylum.

30 NAT [*anxiously—lowering his voice*]. And you'll come to take him away tonight—for sure?

HIGGINS. Twenty minutes after I leave here I'll be back in the car. That's positive.

NAT. And you know your way through the house?

12. *Celebes*, islands of the Malay Archipelago, southeast of Asia, in the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

HIGGINS. Certainly, I remember—but I don't see——

NAT. The outside door will be left open for you. You must come right up. My sister and I will be here—with him. And you understand—— Neither of us knows anything about this. The authorities have been complained to — 5 not by us, mind—but by someone. He must never know ——

HIGGINS. Yes, yes—but still I don't—— Is he liable to prove violent?

NAT. No—no. He's quiet always—too quiet; but he might do something—anything—if he knows—— 10

HIGGINS. Rely on me not to tell him, then; but I'll bring along two attendants in case—— [*He breaks off and continues in matter-of-fact tones.*] And now for the facts in this case, if you don't mind, Mr. Bartlett. ✓

NAT [*shaking his head—moodily*]. There are cases where 15 facts —— Well, here goes—the brass tacks. My father was a whaling captain like his father before him. The last trip he made was seven years ago. He expected to be gone two years. It was four before we saw him again. His ship had been wrecked in the Indian Ocean. He and six others man- 20 aged to reach a small island on the fringe of the Archipelago—an island barren as hell, Doctor—after seven days in an open boat. The rest of the whaling crew never were heard from again—gone to the sharks. Of the six who reached the island with my father only three were alive when a fleet 25 of Malay canoes picked them up, mad from thirst and starvation, the four of them. These four men finally reached Frisco. [*With great emphasis.*] They were my father; Silas Horne, the mate; Cates, the bo'sun; and Jimmy Kanaka, a Hawaiian harpooner. Those four! [*With a forced laugh.*] 30 There are facts for you. It was all in the papers at the time—my father's story.

HIGGINS. But what of the other three who were on the island?

NAT [*harshly*]. Died of exposure, perhaps. Mad and jumped into the sea, perhaps. That was the told story. Another was whispered—killed and eaten, perhaps! But gone—vanished—that, undeniably. That was the fact. For
5 the rest—who knows? And what does it matter?

HIGGINS [*with a shudder*]. I should think it would matter—a lot.

NAT [*fiercely*]. We're dealing with facts, Doctor! [*With a laugh.*] And here are some more for you. My father brought
10 the three down to this house with him—Horne and Cates and Jinmy Kanaka. We hardly recognized my father. He had been through hell, and looked it. His hair was white. But you'll see for yourself—soon. And the others—they were all a bit queer, too—mad, if you will. [*He laughs*
15 *again.*] So much for the facts, Doctor. They leave off there and the dreams begin.

HIGGINS [*doubtfully*]. It would seem—the facts are enough.

NAT. Wait. [*He resumes deliberately.*] One day my father sent for me and in the presence of the others told me
20 the dream. I was to be heir to the secret. Their second day on the island, he said, they discovered in a sheltered inlet the rotten, water-logged hulk of a Malay prau—a proper war prau such as the pirates used to use. She had been there rotting—God knows how long. The crew had
25 vanished—God knows where, for there was no sign on the island that man had ever touched there. The Kanakas went over the prau—they're devils for staying under water, you know—and they found—in two chests—[*he leans back in his chair and smiles ironically*]—Guess what, Doctor?

30 HIGGINS [*with an answering smile*]. Treasure, of course.

NAT [*leaning forward and pointing his finger accusingly at the other*]. You see! The root of belief is in you, too! [*Then he leans back with a hollow chuckle.*] Why, yes. Treasure,

to be sure. What else? They landed it and—you can guess the rest, too—diamonds, emeralds, gold ornaments—innumerable, of course. Why limit the stuff of dreams? Ha-ha! [*He laughs sardonically as if mocking himself.*]

HIGGINS [*deeply interested*]. And then?

5

NAT. They began to go mad—hunger, thirst, and the rest—and they began to forget. Oh, they forgot a lot, and lucky for them they did, probably. But my father realizing, as he told me, what was happening to them, insisted that while they still knew what they were doing they should— 10 guess again now, Doctor. Ha-ha!

HIGGINS. Bury the treasure?

NAT [*ironically*]. Simple, isn't it? Ha-ha! And then they made a map—the same old dream, you see—with a charred stick, and my father had care of it. They were picked up 15 soon after, mad as hatters, as I have told you, by some Malays. [*He drops his mocking and adopts a calm, deliberate tone again.*] But the map isn't a dream, Doctor. We're coming back to facts again. [*He reaches into the pocket of his mackinaw and pulls out a crumpled paper.*] Here. [*He 20 spreads it out on the table.*]

HIGGINS [*craning his neck eagerly*]. Dammit! This is interesting. The treasure, I suppose, is where——

NAT. Where the cross is made.

HIGGINS. And here are the signatures, I see. And that 25 sign?

NAT. Jimmy Kanaka's. He couldn't write.

HIGGINS. And below? That's yours, isn't it?

NAT. As heir to the secret, yes. We all signed it here the morning the *Mary Allen*, the schooner my father had 30 mortgaged this house to fit out, set sail to bring back the treasure. Ha-ha!

HIGGINS. The ship he's still looking for—that was lost three years ago?

NAT. The *Mary Allen*, yes. The other three men sailed away on her. Only father and the mate knew the approximate location of the island—and I—as heir. It's—— [*He hesitates, frowning.*] No matter. I'll keep the mad secret.
5 My father wanted to go with them—but my mother was dying. I dared not go either.

HIGGINS. Then you wanted to go? You believed in the treasure then?

NAT. Of course. Ha-ha! How could I help it? I believed
10 until my mother's death. Then *he* became mad, entirely mad. He built this cabin—to wait in—and he suspected my growing doubt as time went on. So, as final proof, he gave me a thing he had kept hidden from them all—a sample of the richest of the treasure. Ha-ha! Behold! [*He takes from*
15 *his pocket a heavy bracelet thickly studded with stones and throws it on the table near the lantern.*]

HIGGINS [*picking it up with eager curiosity—as if in spite of himself*]. Real jewels?

NAT. Ha-ha! You want to believe, too. No—paste and
20 brass—Malay ornaments.

HIGGINS. You had it looked over?

NAT. Like a fool, yes. [*He puts it back in his pocket and shakes his head as if throwing off a burden.*] Now you know why he's mad—waiting for that ship—and why in the end I
25 had to ask you to take him away where he'll be safe. The mortgage—the price of that ship—is to be foreclosed. We have to move, my sister and I. We can't take him with us. She is to be married soon. Perhaps away from the sight of the sea he may——

30 HIGGINS [*perfunctorily*]. Let's hope for the best. And I fully appreciate your position. [*He gets up, smiling.*] And thank you for the interesting story. I'll know how to humor him when he raves about treasure.

NAT [*somberly*]. He is quiet always—too quiet. He only
35 walks to and fro—watching ——

HIGGINS. Well, I must go. You think it's best to take him tonight?

NAT [*persuasively*]. Yes, Doctor. The neighbors—they're far away but—for my sister's sake—you understand.

HIGGINS. I see. It must be hard on her—this sort of thing— Well—[*He goes to the door, which NAT opens for him.*] I'll return presently. [*He starts to descend.*]

NAT [*urgently*]. Don't fail us, Doctor. And come right up. He'll be here. [*He closes the door and tiptoes carefully to the companionway. He ascends it a few steps and remains for a moment listening for some sound from above. Then he goes over to the table, turning the lantern very low, and sits down, resting his elbows, his chin on his hands, staring somberly before him. The door in the rear is slowly opened. It creaks slightly and NAT jumps to his feet—in a thick voice of terror.*] 15
Who's there?

[*The door swings wide open, revealing SUE BARTLETT. She ascends into the room and shuts the door behind her. She is a tall, slender woman of twenty-five, with a pale, sad face framed in a mass of dark red hair. This hair furnishes the only touch of color about her. Her full lips are pale; the blue of her wistful wide eyes is fading into a twilight gray. Her voice is low and melancholy. She wears a dark wrapper and slippers.*]

SUE [*stands and looks at her brother accusingly*]. It's only I. What are you afraid of?

NAT [*averts his eyes and sinks back on his chair again*]. Nothing. I didn't know—I thought you were in your room. 20

SUE [*comes to the table*]. I was reading. Then I heard someone come down the stairs and go out. Who was it? [*With sudden terror.*] It wasn't—Father?

NAT. No. He's up there—watching—as he always is.

SUE [*sitting down—insistently*]. Who was it?

NAT [*evasively*]. A man—I know.

SUE. What man? What is he? You're holding something back. Tell me.

NAT [*raising his eyes defiantly*]. A doctor.

5 SUE [*alarmed*]. Oh! [*With quick intuition.*] You brought him up here—so that I wouldn't know!

NAT [*doggedly*]. No. I took him up here to see how things were—to ask him about Father.

SUE [*as if afraid of the answer she will get*]. Is he one of
10 them—from the asylum? Oh, Nat, you haven't——

NAT [*interrupting her—hoarsely*]. No, no! Be still.

SUE. That would be—the last horror.

NAT [*defiantly*]. Why? You always say that. What
could be more horrible than things as they are? I believe
15 —it would be better for him—away—where he couldn't see the sea. He'll forget his mad idea of waiting for a lost ship and a treasure that never was. [*As if trying to convince himself—vehemently.*] I believe this!

SUE [*reproachfully*]. You don't, Nat. You know he'd die
20 if he hadn't the sea to live with.

NAT [*bitterly*]. And you know old Smith will foreclose the mortgage. Is that nothing? We cannot pay. He came yesterday and talked with me. He knows the place is his—to all purposes. He talked as if we were merely his tenants,
25 curse him! And he swore he'd foreclose immediately unless—

SUE [*eagerly*]. What?

NAT [*in a hard voice*]. Unless we have—Father—taken away.

SUE [*in anguish*]. Oh! But why, why? What is Father
30 to him?

NAT. The value of the property—our home which is his, Smith's. The neighbors are afraid. They pass by on the road at nights coming back to their farms from the town. They see *him* up there walking back and forth—waving his

arms against the sky. They're afraid. They talk of a complaint. They say for his own good he must be taken away. They even whisper the house is haunted. Old Smith is afraid of his property. He thinks that *he* may set fire to the house—do anything——

SUE [*despairingly*]. But you told him how foolish that was, didn't you? That Father is quiet, always quiet.

NAT. What's the use of telling—when they believe—when they're afraid? [SUE *hides her face in her hands—a pause—*NAT *whispers hoarsely*:] I've been afraid myself—at 10 times.

SUE. Oh, Nat! Of what?

NAT [*violently*]. Oh, him and the sea he calls to! Of the damned sea he forced me on as a boy—the sea that robbed me of my arm and made me the broken thing I am! 15

SUE [*pleadingly*]. You can't blame Father—for your misfortune.

NAT. He took me from school and forced me on his ship, didn't he? What would I have been now but an ignorant sailor like him if he had had his way? No. It's the sea I 20 should not blame, that foiled him by taking my arm and then throwing me ashore—another one of *his* wrecks!

SUE [*with a sob*]. You're bitter, Nat—and hard. It was so long ago. Why can't you forget?

NAT [*bitterly*]. Forget! You can talk! When Tom comes 25 home from this voyage you'll be married and out of this with life before you—a captain's wife as our mother was. I wish you joy.

SUE [*supplicatingly*]. And you'll come with us, Nat—and father, too—and then——

NAT. Would you saddle your young husband with a madman and a cripple? [*Fiercely*.] No, no, not I! [*Vindictively*.] And not him, either! [*With sudden meaning—deliberately*.] I've got to stay here. My book is three- 30

fourths done—my book that will set me free! But I know, I feel, as sure as I stand here living before you, that I must finish it here. It could not live for me outside of this house where it was born. [*Staring at her fixedly.*] So I will stay—
5 in spite of hell! [*SUE sobs hopelessly. After a pause he continues:*] Old Smith told me I could live here indefinitely without paying—as caretaker—if——

SUE [*fearfully—like a whispered echo*]. If?

NAT [*staring at her—in a hard voice*]. If I have him sent
10 —where he'll no longer harm himself—nor others.

SUE [*with horrified dread*]. No—no, Nat! For our dead mother's sake.

NAT [*struggling*]. Did I say I had? Why do you look at me—like that?

15 SUE. Nat! Nat! For our mother's sake!

NAT [*in terror*]. Stop! Stop! She's dead—and at peace. Would you bring her tired soul back to him again to be bruised and wounded?

SUE. Nat!

20 NAT [*clutching at his throat as though to strangle something within him—hoarsely*]. Sue! Have mercy! [*His sister stares at him with dread foreboding. NAT calms himself with an effort and continues deliberately:*] Smith said he would give two thousand cash if I would sell the place to him—and he
25 would let me stay, rent free, as caretaker.

SUE [*scornfully*]. Two thousand! Why, over and above the mortgage it's worth——

NAT. It's not what it's worth. It's what one can get, cash—for my book—for freedom!

30 SUE. So that's why he wants Father sent away, the wretch! He must know the will Father made——

NAT. Gives the place to me. Yes, he knows. I told him.

SUE [*dully*]. Ah, how vile men are!

NAT [*persuasively*]. If it were to be done—if it were, I say—there'd be half for you for your wedding portion. That's fair.

SUE [*horrified*]. Blood money! Do you think I could touch it? 5

NAT [*persuasively*]. It would be only fair. I'd give it you.

SUE. My God, Nat, are you trying to bribe me?

NAT. No. It's yours in all fairness. [*With a twisted smile.*] You forget I'm heir to the treasure, too, and can afford to be generous. Ha-ha! 10

SUE [*alarmed*]. Nat! You're so strange. You're sick, Nat. You couldn't talk this way if you were yourself. Oh, we must go away from here—you and father and I! Let Smith foreclose. There'll be something over the mortgage; and we'll move to some little house—by the sea so that 15 father——

NAT [*fiercely*]. Can keep up his mad game with me—whispering dreams in my ear—pointing out to sea—mocking me with stuff like this! [*He takes the bracelet from his pocket. The sight of it infuriates him and he hurls it into a corner, 20 exclaiming in a terrible voice:*] No! No! It's too late for dreams now. It's too late! I've put them behind me to-night—forever!

SUE [*looks at him and suddenly understands that what she dreads has come to pass—letting her head fall on her outstretched 25 arms with a long moan.*] Then—you've done it! You've sold him! Oh, Nat, you're cursed!

NAT [*with a terrified glance at the roof above*]. Ssshh! What are you saying? He'll be better off—away from the sea.

SUE [*dully*]. You've sold him. 30

NAT [*wildly*]. No! No! [*He takes the map from his pocket.*] Listen, Sue! For God's sake, listen to me! See! The map of the island. [*He spreads it out on the table.*] And the treasure—where the cross is made. [*He gulps and his words*

pour out incoherently.] I've carried it about for years. Is that nothing? You don't know what it means. It stands between me and my book. It's stood between me and life—driving me mad! He taught me to wait and hope with him
5 —wait and hope—day after day. He made me doubt my brain and give the lie to my eyes—when hope was dead—when I knew it was all a dream—I couldn't kill it! [*His eyes starting from his head.*] God forgive me, I still believe! And that's mad—mad, do you hear?

10 SUE [*looking at him with horror*]. And that is why—you hate him!

NAT. No, I don't—— [*Then in a sudden frenzy.*] Yes! I do hate him! He's stolen my brain! I've got to free myself, can't you see, from him—and his madness.

15 SUE [*terrified—appealingly*]. Nat! Don't! You talk as if——

NAT [*with a wild laugh*]. As if I were mad? You're right—but I'll be mad no more! See! [*He opens the lantern and sets fire to the map in his hand. When he shuts the lantern*
20 *again it flickers and goes out. They watch the paper burn with fascinated eyes as he talks.*] See how I free myself and become sane. And now for facts, as the doctor said. I lied to you about him. He was a doctor from the asylum. See how it burns! It must all be destroyed—this poisonous madness.
25 Yes, I lied to you—see—it's gone—the last speck—and the only other map is the one Silas Horne took to the bottom of the sea with him. [*He lets the ash fall to the floor and crushes it with his foot.*] Gone! I'm free of it—at last! [*His face is very pale, but he goes on calmly.*] Yes, I sold him, if you will
30 —to save my soul. They're coming from the asylum to get him——

[*There is a loud, muffled cry from above, which sounds like "Sail-ho," and a stamping of feet. The slide to the com-*

panionway above is slid back with a bang. A gust of air tears down into the room. NAT and SUE have jumped to their feet and stand petrified. CAPTAIN BARTLETT tramps down the stairs.]

NAT [*with a shudder*]. God! Did he hear?

SUE. Ssshh!

[CAPTAIN BARTLETT comes into the room. He bears a striking resemblance to his son, but his face is more stern and formidable, his form more robust, erect, and muscular. His mass of hair is pure white, his bristly mustache the same, contrasting with the weather-beaten leather color of his furrowed face. Bushy gray brows overhang the obsessed glare of his fierce dark eyes. He wears a heavy, double-breasted blue coat, pants of the same material, and rubber boots turned down from the knee.]

BARTLETT [*in a state of mad exultation strides toward his son and points an accusing finger at him. NAT shrinks backward a step.*] Bin thinkin' me mad, did ye? Thinkin' it 5 for the past three years, ye bin—ever since them fools on the *Slocum* tattled their damn lie o' the *Mary Allen* bein' a wreck.

NAT [*swallowing hard chokingly*]. No—Father—I—

BARTLETT. Don't lie, ye whelp! You that I'd made my 10 heir—aimin' to git me out o' the way! Aimin' to put me behind the bars o' the jail for mad folk!

SUE. Father—no!

BARTLETT [*waving his hand for her to be silent*]. Not you, girl, not you. You're your mother.

NAT [*very pale*]. Father—do you think —I —

BARTLETT [*fiercely*]. A lie in your eyes! I bin a-readin' 'em. My curse on you!

SUE. Father! Don't!

BARTLETT. Leave me be, girl. He believed, didn't he? And ain't he turned traitor—mockin' at me and sayin' it's all a lie—mockin' at himself, too, for bein' a fool to believe in dreams, as he calls 'em.

5 NAT [*placatingly*]. You're wrong, Father. I do believe.

BARTLETT [*triumphantly*]. Aye, now ye do! Who wouldn't credit their own eyes?

NAT [*mystified*]. Eyes?

BARTLETT. Have ye not seen her, then? Did ye not hear
10 me hail?

NAT [*confusedly*]. Hail? I heard a shout. But—hail what?—see what?

BARTLETT [*grimly*]. Aye, now's your punishment, Judas. [*Explosively.*] The *Mary Allen*, ye blind fool, come back from
15 the Southern Seas—come back as I swore she must!

SUE [*trying to soothe him*]. Father! Be quiet. It's nothing.

BARTLETT [*not heeding her—his eyes fixed hypnotically on his son's.*] Turned the pint a half-hour back—the *Mary Allen*—loaded with gold as I swore she would be—carryin' her
20 lowers—not a reef in 'em—makin' port, boy, as I swore she must—too late for traitors, boy, too late!—droppin' her anchor just when I hailed her.

NAT [*a haunted, fascinated look in his eyes, which are fixed immovably on his father's.*] The *Mary Allen*! But how do
25 you know?

BARTLETT. Not know my own ship! 'Tis you're mad!

NAT. But at night—some other schooner——

BARTLETT. No other, I say! The *Mary Allen*—clear in the moonlight. And heed this: D'you call to mind
30 the signal I gave to Silas Horne if he made this port o' a night?

NAT [*slowly*]. A red and a green light at the mainmast-head.

BARTLETT [*triumphantly*]. Then look out if ye dare! [*He goes to the porthole, left forward.*] Ye can see it plain from
35

here. [*Commandingly.*] Will ye believe your eyes? Look—and then call me mad! [*NAT peers through the porthole and starts back, a dumbfounded expression on his face.*]

NAT [*slowly*]. A red and a green at the mainmast-head. Yes—clear as day. 5

SUE [*with a worried look at him*]. Let me see. [*She goes to the porthole.*]

BARTLETT [*to his son with fierce satisfaction*]. Aye, ye see now clear enough—too late for you. [*NAT stares at him spell-bound.*] And from above I saw Horne and Cates and Jimmy 10 Kanaka plain on the deck in the moonlight lookin' up at me. Come!

[*He strides to the companionway, followed by NAT. The two of them ascend. SUE turns from the porthole, an expression of frightened bewilderment on her face. She shakes her head sadly. A loud "Mary Allen, ahoy!" comes from above in BARTLETT'S voice, followed like an echo by the same hail from NAT. SUE covers her face with her hands, shuddering. NAT comes down the companionway, his eyes wild and exulting.*]

SUE [*brokenly*]. He's bad tonight, Nat. You're right to humor him. It's the best thing.

NAT [*savagely*]. Humor him? What in hell do you mean? 15

SUE [*pointing to the porthole*]. There's nothing there, Nat. There's not a ship in harbor.

NAT. You're a fool—or blind! The *Mary Allen's* there in plain sight of anyone, with the red and the green signal lights. Those fools lied about her being wrecked. And I've 20 been a fool, too.

SUE. But, Nat, there's nothing. [*She goes over to the porthole again.*] Not a ship. See.

NAT. I saw, I tell you! From above it's all plain. [*He turns from her and goes back to his seat by the table. SUE 25 follows him, pleading frightenedly.*]

SUE. Nat! You mustn't let this—— You're all excited and trembling, Nat. [*She puts a soothing hand on his forehead.*]

NAT [*pushing her away from him roughly*]. You blind fool!

[BARTLETT comes down the steps of the companionway. His face is transfigured with the ecstasy of a dream come true.]

5 BARTLETT. They've lowered a boat—the three—Horne and Cates and Jimmy Kanaka. They're a-rowin' ashore. I heard the oars in the locks. Listen! [*A pause.*]

NAT [*excitedly*]. I hear!

SUE [*who has taken the chair by her brother—in a warning*
10 *whisper*]. It's the wind and sea you hear, Nat. Please!

BARTLETT [*suddenly*]. Hark! They've landed. They're back on earth again as I swore they'd come back. They'll be a-comin' up the path now.

[*He stands in an attitude of rigid attention. NAT strains forward in his chair. The sound of the wind and sea suddenly ceases and there is a heavy silence. A dense green glow floods slowly in rhythmic waves like a liquid into the room—as of great depths of the sea faintly penetrated by light.*]

NAT [*catching at his sister's hand—chokingly*]. See how the
15 light changes! Green and gold! [*He shivers.*] Deep under the sea! I've been drowned for years! [*Hysterically.*] Save me! Save me!

SUE [*patting his hand comfortingly*]. Only the moonlight, Nat. It hasn't changed. Be quiet, dear; it's nothing.

[*The green light grows deeper and deeper.*]

20 BARTLETT [*in a crooning, monotonous tone*]. They move slowly—slowly. They're heavy, I know, heavy—the two chests. Hark! They're below at the door. You hear?

NAT [*starting to his feet*]. I hear! I left the door open.

BARTLETT. For them?

NAT. For them.

SUE [*shuddering*]. Sssh!

[*The sound of a door being heavily slammed is heard from way down in the house.*]

NAT [*to his sister—excitedly*]. There! You hear?

SUE. A shutter in the wind. 5

NAT. There is no wind.

BARTLETT. Up they come! Up, bullies! They're heavy—heavy!

[*The paddling of bare feet sounds from the floor below—then comes up the stairs.*]

NAT. You hear them now?

SUE. Only the rats running about. It's nothing, Nat. 10

BARTLETT [*rushing to the door and throwing it open*]. Come in, lads, come in!—and welcome home!

[*The forms of SILAS HORNE, CATES, and JIMMY KANAKA rise noiselessly into the room from the stairs. The last two carry heavy inlaid chests. HORNE is a parrot-nosed, angular old man dressed in gray cotton trousers and a singlet torn open across his hairy chest. JIMMY is a tall, sinewy, bronzed young Kanaka. He wears only a breech cloth. CATES is squat and stout and is dressed in dungaree pants and a shredded white sailor's blouse, stained with iron rust. All are in their bare feet. Water drips from their soaked and rotten clothes. Their hair is matted, intertwined with slimy strands of seaweed. Their eyes, as they glide silently into the room, stare frightfully wide at nothing. Their flesh in the green light has the suggestion of decomposition. Their bodies sway limply, nervelessly, rhythmically as if to the pulse of long swells of the deep sea.*]

Stage directions. *singlet*, waistcoat or jersey; *dungaree*, coarse cotton material.

NAT [*making a step toward them*]. See! [*Frenziedly*].
Welcome home, boys!

SUE [*grabbing his arm*]. Sit down, Nat. It's nothing.
There's no one there. Father—sit down!

5 BARTLETT [*grinning at the three and putting his finger to his lips*]. Not here, boys, not here—not before him. [*He points to his son.*] He has no right, now. Come. The treasure is ours only. We'll go away with it together. Come. [*He goes to the companionway. The three follow. At the foot of it*
10 HORNE puts a swaying hand on his shoulder and with the other holds out a piece of paper to him. BARTLETT takes it and chuckles exultantly.] That's right—for him—that's right! [*He ascends. The figures sway up after him.*]

NAT [*frenziedly*]. Wait! [*He struggles toward the com-*
15 *panionway.*]

SUE [*trying to hold him back*]. Nat—don't! Father—come back!

NAT. Father! [*He flings her away from him and rushes up the companionway. He pounds against the slide, which*
20 *seems to have been shut down on him.*]

SUE [*hysterically—runs wildly to the door in rear*]. Help! Help! [*As she gets to the door DOCTOR HIGGINS appears, hurrying up the stairs.*]

HIGGINS [*excitedly*]. Just a moment, Miss. What's the
25 matter?

SUE [*with a gasp*]. My father—up there!

HIGGINS. I can't see—where's my flash? Ah. [*He flashes it on her terror-stricken face, then quickly around the room. The green glow disappears. The wind and sea are*
30 *heard again. Clear moonlight floods through the portholes. HIGGINS springs to the companionway. NAT is still pounding.*] Here, Bartlett. Let me try.

NAT [*coming down—looking dully at the doctor*]. They've locked it. I can't get up.

HIGGINS [*looks up—in an astonished voice*]. What's the matter, Bartlett? It's all open. [*He starts to ascend.*]

NAT [*in a voice of warning*]. Look out, man! Look out for them!

HIGGINS [*calls down from above*]. Them? Who? There's 5
no one here. [*Suddenly—in alarm.*] Come up! Lend a hand here! He's fainted!

[NAT goes up slowly. SUE goes over and lights the lantern, then hurries back to the foot of the companionway with it. There is a scuffling noise from above. They reappear, carrying CAPTAIN BARTLETT'S body.] 10

HIGGINS. Easy now! [*They lay him on the couch in rear. SUE sets the lantern down by the couch. HIGGINS bends and listens for a heart-beat. Then he rises, shaking his head.*] 10
I'm sorry——

SUE [*dully*]. Dead?

HIGGINS [*nodding*]. Heart failure, I should judge. [*With an attempt at consolation.*] Perhaps it's better so, if——

NAT [*as if in a trance*]. There was something Horne 15
handed him. Did you see?

SUE [*wringing her hands*]. Oh, Nat, be still! He's dead.
[*To HIGGINS with pitiful appeal.*] Please go—go——

HIGGINS. There's nothing I can do?

SUE. Go—please—— [*HIGGINS bows stiffly and goes out.* 20
NAT moves slowly to his father's body, as if attracted by some irresistible fascination.]

NAT. Didn't you see? Horne handed him something.

SUE [*sobbing*]. Nat! Nat! Come away! Don't touch him, Nat! Come away! [*But her brother does not heed her.* 25
His gaze is fixed on his father's right hand, which hangs downward over the side of the couch. He pounces on it and, forcing the clenched fingers open with a great effort, secures a crumpled ball of paper.]

NAT [*flourishing it above his head with a shout of triumph*]. See! [*He bends down and spreads it out in the light of the lantern.*] The map of the island! Look! It isn't lost for me after all! There's still a chance—*my* chance! [*With*
5 *mad, solemn decision.*] When the house is sold I'll go—and I'll find it! Look! It's written here in his handwriting: "The treasure is buried where the cross is made."

SUE [*covering her face with her hands—brokenly*]. Oh, God! Come away, Nat! Come away!

[*The curtain falls.*]

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. Study the detailed stage directions through the play. How do they help in the visualization of the scenes, in giving a more vivid impression of the characters, and in suggesting the prevailing mood of the play?

2. Summarize the situation. Show how within the play O'Neill makes his audience familiar with all the essential facts leading up to the last few moments of Captain Bartlett's life.

3. As a further study of the effect on men of the supposed discovery of treasure on a desert island compare this play with O'Neill's expansion in *Gold* of this same theme.

4. Wherein is the center of interest different here from that in *Treasure Island* and *The Gold Bug*?

5. What is your reaction to O'Neill's ghost scene—the appearance of the ghosts of Silas Horne, Cates, and Jimmy Kanaka? Compare with Shakespearean ghost scenes which you remember.

6. Does the change in Nat at the close of the play seem consistent to you?

7. What do you think of O'Neill's presentation of Captain Bartlett?

8. What is your final impression of the play?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. As a further study of the effect of an obsession upon an individual read and report upon *Ile*, *The Emperor Jones*, and *The Hairy Ape*.
2. Outline the plot of the most interesting American drama that you have recently seen or read.
3. Draw up a list of topics that might possibly be molded into one-act plays.

THE AMERICAN DRAMA—MOVEMENTS AND TENDENCIES—A FEW SUGGESTED BOOKS

- Louise Burleigh, *The Community Theatre in Theory and Practice* (Little, Brown and Company, 1917). A clear and enthusiastic presentation.
- Barrett H. Clark, *The British and American Drama of To-day* (Henry Holt and Company, 1915). Analysis and study outlines for a number of the American dramatists.
- Thomas H. Dickinson, *The Case of American Drama* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1915). A discriminating book on modern tendencies, with constructive suggestions.
- Thomas H. Dickinson, *The Insurgent Theatre* (B. W. Huebsch, 1918). Conclusion seems to be "American municipalities should promptly endow and inaugurate their own theatres."
- Arthur Hornblow, *A History of the Theatre in America* (J. B. Lippincott Company, 1919). Two volumes. The title indicates the author's primary interest, which is the history of the *theatre* rather than of dramatists, movements, and tendencies in connection with plays themselves.
- Constance D'Arcy Mackay, *The Little Theatre in the United States* (Henry Holt and Company, 1917). Irritating because often inaccurate. Contains much valuable material. Chapter One summarizes the rise of little theatres in Europe.
- Percy Mackaye, *The Playhouse and the Play* (The Macmillan Co., 1909), *The Civic Theatre* (Mitchell Kennerley, 1912),

The Community Drama (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1917). See comments on Mackaye in introduction to O'Neill and American Drama.

Montrose J. Moses, *The American Dramatist* (Little, Brown, and Company, 1917). Interesting but not comprehensive.

A. H. Quinn, *The Significance of Recent American Drama* (The Century Company, 1917). See the introductory essay to *Contemporary American Plays*.

ANTHOLOGIES

George P. Baker, *Modern American Plays* (Harcourt, Brace, and Howe, 1920). Contains plays by Thomas, Belasco, Sheldon, Anspacher, Massey.

Helen L. Cohen, *Longer Plays by Modern Authors* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922). Contains plays by Fitch, Thomas, Kaufman and Connelly, and Tarkington.

Frederick H. Koch, *Carolina Folk Plays* (Henry Holt and Company, 1923). Plays included listed below under *Plays Especially Suggested*.

Margaret G. Mayorga, *Representative One-Act Plays by American Authors* (Little, Brown and Company, 1919). Contains twenty-four one-act plays.

Montrose J. Moses, *Representative Plays by American Dramatists* (E. P. Dutton and Company). Volume III (1921) contains plays by the following transition and modern dramatists: Thomas, Fitch, Mitchell, Walter, and Belasco.

Arthur Hobson Quinn, *Representative American Plays* (The Century Company, 1917). Contains plays by Mitchell, Fitch, Thomas, Moody, Mackaye, Sheldon, and Crothers.

Arthur Hobson Quinn, *Contemporary American Plays* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923). Contains plays by O'Neill, Williams, Crothers, Emery, Kaufman and Connelly.

For additional bibliography on American Drama see Manly and Rickert, *Contemporary American Literature* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922), pages xvi-xvii.

PLAYS ESPECIALLY SUGGESTED BECAUSE OF THE INTEREST
OF THE AUTHORS OR EDITORS IN THE NEW
MOVEMENTS AND TENDENCIES

Zona Gale, *Neighbors*, a *genre* picture of generous, kindly life in a mid-Western village; *Miss Lulu Bett*, portrayal of family life in a mid-Western town; the heroine is the drudge of the family.

Susan Glaspell, *Suppressed Desires*, clever, sparkling satire on a current fad in thinking; *The Inheritors*, a play treating of pioneer and modern life in the Middle West, with interest at the close centered in a college founded by one of the pioneers. Since it treats of three generations, it might well be read and studied in comparison with *Milestones*.

Frederick H. Koch (editor), *Carolina Folk Plays*: Elizabeth A. Lay, *When Witches Ride*, a play of Carolina folk superstition; Harold Williamson, *Peggy*, a tragedy of the tenant farmer; Hubert Heffner, "*Dod Gast Ye Both!*" a comedy of mountain moonshiners; Dougald MacMillan, *Off Nag's Head or The Bell Buoy*, a tragedy of the North Carolina coast; Paul Greene, *The Last of the Lowries*, a play of the Croatian outlaws of Robeson County, North Carolina.

PLAYS SUGGESTED FOR ADDITIONAL READING

David Belasco, *The Return of Peter Grimm*.

Clyde Fitch, *The Climbers*, *The Truth*, *The Stubbornness of Geraldine*.

Charles Rann Kennedy, *The Servant in the House*, *The Terrible Meek*.

Percy Mackaye, *The Scarecrow*.

William Vaughn Moody, *The Great Divide*, *The Faith Healer*.

Edward Sheldon, *The Boss*, *Romance*.

Booth Tarkington, *Clarence*, *Seventeen*.

Augustus Thomas, *In Mizzoura*, *The Witching Hour*.

EUGENE O'NEILL—DRAMAS

The Moon of the Caribbees and Other Plays of the Sea (*Bound East for Cardiff; The Long Voyage Home; In the Zone; Ile; Where the Cross Is Made; The Rope*). All except the last have direct relation to the sea. *Ile* is the most powerful of the group, and is by some regarded as his best play.

Gold. An expansion of the situation in *Where the Cross Is Made*.

Beyond the Horizon. The tragedy of Robert Mayo, who dreamed all his life of the great adventures beyond his horizon—a New England farm inclosed by hills. Awarded the Pulitzer prize as the best American play of 1919–20.

The Emperor Jones. A dramatization of the superstitious terror that overcomes a Negro pullman ex-porter and criminal who becomes "emperor" of an Island in the West Indies.

The Straw. "A play of spiritual triumph for a consumptive victim."

Anna Christie. "A chronicle of regeneration, though a picture of the most sordid conditions." Awarded the Pulitzer prize as the best American play of 1921–22.

The Hairy Ape. The tragedy of a stoker on a ship who tries to find himself. This play was selected as the most significant American drama of 1922 for presentation in Paris.

Other plays: *Thirst*, and *Other One-Act Plays; Diff'rent; The First Man*.

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

(1882)

BY

HENRIK IBSEN

An Enemy of the People is reprinted from *Ghosts and Two Other Plays* by Henrik Ibsen, translated by R. Farquharson Sharp, published in the Everyman's Library, E. P. Dutton and Company, New York. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

INTRODUCTION TO AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

I. HENRIK IBSEN (1828-1906)

Henrik Ibsen was born March 28, 1828, in Skien, a small town in southern Norway. But he was primarily the product of three other racial blends: Danish, Scottish, and German. A Danish ancestor had come to Bergen, Norway, in the early eighteenth century; his great-grandmother was a Scot; and his immediate maternal ancestors were of German origin. When Henrik was eight years old, his father, who had been in comfortable circumstances, lost practically all his property. Years later Ibsen recalled with some bitterness that many who had readily accepted the hospitality of his parents now forgot them very quickly. When Ibsen was fifteen he wished to study drawing and painting, but his father could not provide the money. Instead, the boy was apprenticed to a druggist in Grimstad, a town of about eight hundred in southeastern Norway. Here for the next five years he lived, a critical spectator of society, aloof from those of his own age as well as from the other people of the town, drawing caricatures and writing satirical sketches of them. He prepared for the entrance examinations to Christiania University for the purpose of taking a course in medicine. Though he failed in some of his subjects, and never entered the University, it was through reading Sallust and Cicero in preparation for the examination that he became interested in Catiline, the subject of his first drama (1849). During 1850 he was a revolutionary free-lance in Christiania, living a hand-to-mouth existence, writing sketches, verses, and plays, and once being almost arrested as a member of a group of young conspirators plotting to dethrone the King and establish a democracy in Norway.

In 1851 Ole Bull, the celebrated violinist, called Ibsen to Bergen, Norway, to become director of the newly founded national theatre there. Here he remained for five years as manager, writing several plays in the meantime. From 1857 to 1862 he held similar positions with two theatres in Christiania. Then, after struggling with poverty for two years, financed by small pensions from the government, he left for Italy. From this time until 1891 he was a voluntary exile from his country, living in various parts of Europe, though mostly in Germany and Italy. His last fifteen years he passed in Christiania. He died May 23, 1906, "one of the wealthiest private citizens of Christiania," and the most honored.

With the exception of a few plays, Ibsen's dramatic work falls into three pretty well-defined periods. The first is romantic, his material being largely from the legendary and historical past of Scandinavia. The second is his period of social drama. He finds his material at this time in contemporary life and social institutions; and his attitude is critical or satirical. At the latter end of this period he wrote *An Enemy of the People* (1882). The plays of his last period are mainly individual studies, often lacking the clearness and definiteness of his social dramas. Because of their indirectness and their somewhat concealed meaning they are called symbolistic.

II. IBSEN THE REALIST

Ibsen is of primary significance to students of English and American literature because he set the fashion for the type of drama which became the most prevailingly popular in Europe and America. Speaking broadly, we call this the drama of realism. And by realism as here employed we mean the attempt of an author to create an artistic and truthful presentation of certain selected aspects of contemporary life. This differs essentially from *sentimentalism*,

under which we classified the drama of Robertson, in that sentimentalism always insists on the "essential goodness of human nature" and, as in *Caste*, makes a concession to happy endings contrary to what one would logically expect in actual life. Robertson, to be sure, as already indicated under *Caste*, is a forerunner of realistic drama and helped to set the fashion in England in that he used the material and methods of realistic writers: he presented certain selected aspects of contemporary life. But the best judgment is that, as in *Caste*, he conceded too much to artificial reconciliations and happy endings to be essentially a modern realistic dramatist.

The writer of realistic drama insists that to be true to life R
 he must, even in his conclusions, at times present people as
unkind, selfish, relentless, and cruel; conventions as false;
institutions as outworn; and laws or customs as unjust.
 He holds that, because these are the facts, there are many
 actual even though unnecessary tragedies in life, and that
 he is not faithful to his art and to his public if he fails to
 recognize these facts in his dramas. For the popularization
of this attitude, Ibsen more than any other dramatist is
responsible. This statement is important, because realism
 was finding expression through other contemporary writers
 in Europe. Ibsen was the genius who first put his material W
into such concrete and artistic form that he captured the
attention of the thinking world. His plays treating of the
 problems of contemporary social life were the first to be
 presented in the "free" theatres of Paris, Berlin, and London
 —the theatres which paved the way for the reception later
 of such dramas on the commercial stage. Thus in 1891
 The Independent Theatre in London, the "free" theatre,
 was the first to present Ibsen's *Ghosts*.¹ And in 1893 Pinero,

1. Ibsen had really been introduced to England before this. In 1873 Edmund Gosse wrote an article concerning him for *The Fortnightly Review*, an English magazine. In 1880 William Archer produced a condensed translation of *Pillars of Society* in a morning performance at the Gaiety Theatre. Though *The Doll's House* in form adapted to make a happy ending was produced in England in 1884, the first production of the play as Ibsen wrote it was in 1889 at the Novelty Theatre. (Dickinson, *Contemporary Drama of England*, pages 63 ff. and Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen-Nineties*, page 207.)

turning from the sentimental type of play, wrote *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, the first distinctly modern native realistic drama to be presented in an English commercial theatre. This was the same year that Beerbohm Tree, the famous English actor, produced *An Enemy of the People* at the Haymarket Theatre in London.

The dramas of Ibsen most widely known and most influential for our purposes come within a period of five years (1877-1882). They are *Pillars of Society* (1877), *A Doll's House* (1879), *Ghosts* (1881), and *An Enemy of the People* (1882). Because of their content they are classified as social dramas. As summarized by one student of modern drama, they include characters from contemporary Norwegian life, reflect the doings of families and small communities, and satirize politics, society, and domestic or community life, while the attention is focused upon the individual in conflict with institutions. In the words of another critic, Ibsen exposes "the fundamental untruthfulness of public life." He is an iconoclast, a breaker of images, a preacher of the gospel of the importance of the individual in society. He analyzes the present condition of society, but except by indirect suggestion he fails to outline a plan for constructing a new social order. His main concern for a new social order, as is George Bernard Shaw's, is to make individuals normal again by presenting to them conventionally false and abnormal situations which, he insists, prevail in contemporary society. He is a man of ideas who uses drama as a medium for presenting them to the public. Truth and freedom are the pillars of society; a woman in the home must keep and develop her individuality; the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children; and the strongest man is he who stands alone: these are the ideas which form the basis of *Pillars of Society*, *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, and *An Enemy of the People*.

Furthermore, Ibsen was an artist in the technique of his plays, sometimes pondering for years over the construction of them, and writing and rewriting parts several times. Because the problems he selected out of the little Norwegian

towns were of such universal significance, because he presented them with such apparent fidelity and truthfulness, and because he was such a master craftsman in building his plays, he is recognized as the greatest dramatist of the nineteenth century, despite the fact that he is of a minor nationality and used a language unfamiliar to most of the world.

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE (1882)

Biographers of Ibsen tell us that the mood which prevails in *An Enemy of the People* is the result of the opposition of the "compact majority" to *Ghosts*. In two letters to Georg Brandes, a contemporary Danish critic and friend, he reiterates the thesis of the play. The first, written some months before the appearance of *An Enemy of the People*, in response to Brandes's criticism of *Ghosts*, reads, in part, as follows:

And what can be said of the attitude by the so-called Liberal press—of these leaders of the people who speak and write of freedom of action and thought, and at the same time make themselves the slaves of the supposed opinions of their subscribers? Björnson¹ says: "The majority is always right." And as a practical politician he is bound, I suppose, to say so. I, on the contrary, must of necessity say: "The minority is always right." Naturally I am not thinking of the minority of stagnationists who are left behind by the great middle party which with us is called Liberal; but I mean that minority which leads the van, and pushes on to points which the majority has not yet reached. I mean: That man is right who has allied himself most closely with the future. (Quoted from *The Correspondence of Henrik Ibsen*, translated by John Nilsen Laurvik and Mary Morison [Duffield & Company, New York, 1908], pages 349-350.)

Several months after the appearance of the play Ibsen again wrote Brandes:

1. Bjørnstjerne Björnson (1832-1910) a contemporary Norwegian novelist, poet, playwright, political leader, and reformer. He was popular and had great faith in the people. Ibsen and he knew one another from early manhood.

As to *An Enemy of the People*, if we had a chance to discuss it, I think we should manage to come to an agreement. You are, of course, right when you say that we must all work for the spread of our opinions. But I maintain that a fighter in the intellectual vanguard can never collect a majority round him. In ten years the majority will, possibly, occupy the standpoint which Dr. Stockmann held at the public meeting. But during these ten years the Doctor will not have been standing still; he will still be at least ten years ahead of the majority. He can never have the majority with him. As regards myself, at least, I am conscious of incessant progression. At the point where I stood when I wrote each of my books, there now stands a tolerably compact crowd; but I myself am no longer there; I am elsewhere; farther ahead, I hope (*ibid.*, pages 369-370).

His opinion of the hero of the play is interesting. When sending Hegel, his publisher, part of the manuscript of the drama, he wrote:

Dr. Stockmann and I get on so very well together; we agree on many subjects. But the doctor is a more muddle-headed person than I am; and because of this and other peculiarities of his, people will stand hearing a good many things from him, which they perhaps would not have taken in good part if they had been said by me (*ibid.*, pages 359-360).

TEXT OF THE PLAY

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DR. THOMAS STOCKMANN, *Medical Officer of the Municipal Baths*

MRS. STOCKMANN, *his wife*

PETRA, *their daughter, a teacher*

EJLIF } *their sons (aged thirteen and ten respectively)*
MORTEN }

PETER STOCKMANN, *the Doctor's elder brother; Mayor of the Town and Chief Constable, Chairman of the Baths' Committee, etc., etc.*

MORTEN KIIL, *a tanner (Mrs. Stockmann's adoptive father)*

HOVSTAD, *editor of the "People's Messenger"*

BILLING, *sub-editor*

CAPTAIN HORSTER

ASLAKSEN, *a printer*

Men of various conditions and occupations, some few women, and a troop of schoolboys—the audience at a public meeting

The action takes place in a coast town in southern Norway.

Written 46 years ago

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

ACT I

SCENE. DR. STOCKMANN'S sitting-room. *It is evening. The room is plainly but neatly appointed and furnished. In the right-hand wall are two doors; the farther leads out to the hall, the nearer to the doctor's study. In the left-hand wall, opposite the door leading to the hall, is a door leading to the other rooms occupied by the family. In the middle of the same wall stands the stove, and, farther forward, a couch with a looking-glass hanging over it and an oval table in front of it. On the table, a lighted lamp, with a lamp-shade. At the back of the room, an open door leads to the dining-room.*

[BILLING is seen sitting at the dining table, on which a lamp is burning. He has a napkin tucked under his chin, and MRS. STOCKMANN is standing by the table handing him a large plateful of roast beef. The other places at the table are empty, and the table somewhat in disorder, a meal having evidently recently been finished.]

MRS. STOCKMANN. You see, if you come an hour late, Mr. Billing, you have to put up with cold meat.

BILLING [*as he eats*]. It is uncommonly good, thank you—remarkably good.

MRS. STOCKMANN. My husband makes such a point of having his meals punctually, you know—

BILLING. That doesn't affect me a bit. Indeed, I almost think I enjoy a meal all the better when I can sit down and eat all by myself and undisturbed.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh, well, as long as you are enjoying

it— [*Turns to the hall door, listening.*] I expect that is Mr. Hovstad coming, too.

BILLING. Very likely.

[PETER STOCKMANN comes in. *He wears an overcoat and his official hat, and carries a stick.*]

PETER STOCKMANN. Good evening, Katherine.

5 MRS. STOCKMANN [*coming forward into the sitting-room*]. Ah, good evening—is it you? How good of you to come up and see us!

PETER STOCKMANN. I happened to be passing, and so— [*looks into the dining-room*]. But you have company with
10 you, I see.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*a little embarrassed*]. Oh, no—it was quite by chance he came in. [*Hurriedly.*] Won't you come in and have something, too?

PETER STOCKMANN. I! No, thank you. Good gracious
15 —hot meat at night! Not with my digestion.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh, but just once in a way—

PETER STOCKMANN. No, no, my dear lady; I stick to my tea and bread and butter. It is much more wholesome in the long run—and a little more economical, too.

20 MRS. STOCKMANN [*smiling*]. Now you mustn't think that Thomas and I are spendthrifts.

PETER STOCKMANN. Not you, my dear; I would never think that of you. [*Points to the Doctor's study.*] Is he not at home?

25 MRS. STOCKMANN. No, he went out for a little turn after supper—he and the boys.

PETER STOCKMANN. I doubt if that is a wise thing to do. [*Listens.*] I fancy I hear him coming now.

MRS. STOCKMANN. No, I don't think it is he. [*A knock*
30 *is heard at the door.*] Come in! [*Hovstad comes in from the hall.*] Oh, it is you, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD. Yes, I hope you will forgive me, but I was delayed at the printer's. Good evening, Mr. Mayor.

PETER STOCKMANN [*bowing a little distantly*]. Good evening. You have come on business, no doubt.

HOVSTAD. Partly. It's about an article for the paper. 5

PETER STOCKMANN. So I imagined. I hear my brother has become a prolific contributor to the *People's Messenger*.

HOVSTAD. Yes, he is good enough to write in the *People's Messenger* when he has any home truths to tell.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*to Hovstad*]. But won't you—? 10
[*Points to the dining-room.*]

PETER STOCKMANN. Quite so, quite so. I don't blame him in the least, as a writer, for addressing himself to the quarters where he will find the readiest sympathy. And, besides that, I personally have no reason to bear any ill 15
will to your paper, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD. I quite agree with you.

PETER STOCKMANN. Taking one thing with another, there is an excellent spirit of toleration in the town—an admirable municipal spirit. And it all springs from the fact of our 20
having a great common interest to unite us—an interest that is in an equally high degree the concern of every right-minded citizen—

HOVSTAD. The Baths, yes.

PETER STOCKMANN. Exactly—our fine, new, handsome 25
Baths. Mark my words, Mr. Hovstad—the Baths will become the focus of our municipal life! Not a doubt of it!

MRS. STOCKMANN. That is just what Thomas says.

PETER STOCKMANN. Think how extraordinarily the place has developed within the last year or two! Money has been 30
flowing in, and there is some life and some business doing in the town. Houses and landed property are rising in value every day.

HOVSTAD. And unemployment is diminishing.

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, that is another thing. The burden of the poor rates has been lightened, to the great relief of the propertied classes; and that relief will be even greater if only we get a really good summer this year, and
5 lots of visitors—plenty of invalids, who will make the Baths talked about.

HOVSTAD. And there is a good prospect of that, I hear.

PETER STOCKMANN. It looks very promising. Inquiries about apartments and that sort of thing are reaching us
10 every day.

HOVSTAD. Well, the doctor's article will come in very suitably.

PETER STOCKMANN. Has he been writing something just lately?

15 HOVSTAD. This is something he wrote in the winter; a recommendation of the Baths—an account of the excellent sanitary conditions here. But I held the article over, temporarily.

PETER STOCKMANN. Ah—some little difficulty about it,
20 I suppose?

HOVSTAD. No, not at all; I thought it would be better to wait till the spring, because it is just at this time that people begin to think seriously about their summer quarters.

PETER STOCKMANN. Quite right; you were perfectly right,
25 Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD. Yes, Thomas is really indefatigable when it is a question of the Baths.

PETER STOCKMANN. Well—remember, he is the Medical Officer to the Baths.

30 HOVSTAD. Yes, and what is more, they owe their existence to him.

PETER STOCKMANN. To him? Indeed! It is true I have heard from time to time that some people are of that opinion.

2. *poor rates*, taxes for the support of the needy of a community.

At the same time I must say I imagined that I took a modest part in the enterprise.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, that is what Thomas is always saying.

HOVSTAD. But who denies it, Mr. Stockmann? You set 5 the thing going and made a practical concern of it; we all know that. I only meant that the idea of it came first from the doctor.

PETER STOCKMANN. Oh, ideas—yes! My brother has had plenty of them in his time—unfortunately. But when 10 it is a question of putting an idea into practical shape, you have to apply to a man of different mettle, Mr. Hovstad. And I certainly should have thought that in this house at least—

MRS. STOCKMANN. My dear Peter—

15

HOVSTAD. How can you think that—?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Won't you go in and have something, Mr. Hovstad? My husband is sure to be back directly.

HOVSTAD. Thank you, perhaps just a morsel. [*Goes into the dining-room.*]

20

PETER STOCKMANN [*lowering his voice a little*]. It is a curious thing that these farmers' sons never seem to lose their want of tact.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Surely it is not worth bothering about! Cannot you and Thomas share the credit as brothers? 25

PETER STOCKMANN. I should have thought so; but apparently some people are not satisfied with a share.

MRS. STOCKMANN. What nonsense! You and Thomas get on so capitally together. [*Listens.*] There he is at last, I think. [*Goes out and opens the door leading to the hall.*] 30

DR. STOCKMANN [*laughing and talking outside*]. Look here—here is another guest for you, Katherine. Isn't that jolly! Come in, Captain Horster; hang your coat up on this peg. Ah, you don't wear an overcoat. Just think, Kather-

ine; I met him in the street and could hardly persuade him to come up! [CAPTAIN HORSTER comes into the room and greets MRS. STOCKMANN. He is followed by DR. STOCKMANN.] Come along in, boys. They are ravenously hungry again, 5 you know. Come along, Captain Horster; you must have a slice of beef. [Pushes HORSTER into the dining-room. EJLIF and MORTEN go in after them.]

MRS. STOCKMANN. But, Thomas, don't you see—?

DR. STOCKMANN [turning in the doorway]. Oh, is it you, 10 Peter? [Shakes hands with him.] Now that is very delightful.

PETER STOCKMANN. Unfortunately I must go in a moment—

DR. STOCKMANN. Rubbish! There is some toddy just 15 coming in. You haven't forgotten the toddy, Katherine?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Of course not; the water is boiling now. [Goes into the dining-room.]

PETER STOCKMANN. Toddy, too!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, sit down and we will have it 20 comfortably.

PETER STOCKMANN. Thanks, I never care about an evening's drinking.

DR. STOCKMANN. But this isn't an evening's drinking.

PETER STOCKMANN. It seems to me— [Looks toward the 25 dining-room.] It is extraordinary how they can put away all that food..

DR. STOCKMANN [rubbing his hands]. Yes, isn't it splendid to see young people eat? They always have an appetite, you know! That's as it should be. Lots of food—to build 30 up their strength! They are the people who are going to stir up the fermenting forces of the future, Peter.

PETER STOCKMANN. May I ask what they will find here to "stir up," as you put it?

DR. STOCKMANN. Ah, you must ask the young people that—when the time comes. We shan't be able to see it, of course. That stands to reason—two old fogies, like us—

PETER STOCKMANN. Really, really! I must say that is an extremely odd expression to—

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, you mustn't take me too literally, Peter. I am so heartily happy and contented, you know. I think it is such an extraordinary piece of good fortune to be in the middle of all this growing, germinating life. It is a splendid time to live in! It is as if a whole new world were being created around one.

PETER STOCKMANN. Do you really think so?

DR. STOCKMANN. Ah, naturally you can't appreciate it as keenly as I. You have lived all your life in these surroundings, and your impressions have got blunted. But I, who have been buried all these years in my little corner up north, almost without ever seeing a stranger who might bring new ideas with him—well, in my case it has just the same effect as if I had been transported into the middle of a crowded city.

PETER STOCKMANN. Oh, a city—!

DR. STOCKMANN. I know, I know; it is all cramped enough here, compared with many other places. But there is life here—there is promise—there are innumerable things to work for and fight for; and that is the main thing. [Calls.] Katherine, hasn't the postman been here?

MRS. STOCKMANN [from the dining-room]. No.

DR. STOCKMANN. And then to be comfortably off, Peter! That is something one learns to value, when one has been on the brink of starvation, as we have.

PETER STOCKMANN. Oh, surely—

DR. STOCKMANN. Indeed I can assure you we have often been very hard put to it, up there. And now to be able to live like a lord! Today, for instance, we had roast beef for

dinner—and, what is more, for supper too. Won't you come and have a little bit? Or let me show it you, at any rate? Come here—

PETER STOCKMANN. No, no—not for worlds!

5 DR. STOCKMANN. Well, but just come here then. Do you see, we have got a table-cover?

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, I noticed it.

DR. STOCKMANN. And we have got a lamp-shade too. Do you see? All out of Katherine's savings! It makes
10 the room so cozy. Don't you think so? Just stand here for a moment—no, no, not there—just here, that's it! Look now, when you get the light on it all together—I really think it looks very nice, doesn't it?

PETER STOCKMANN. Oh, if you can afford luxuries of
15 this kind—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, I can afford it now. Katherine tells me I earn almost as much as we spend.

PETER STOCKMANN. Almost—yes!

DR. STOCKMANN. But a scientific man must live in a
20 little bit of style. I am quite sure an ordinary civil servant spends more in a year than I do.

PETER STOCKMANN. I daresay. A civil servant—a man in a well-paid position—

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, any ordinary merchant, then!
25 A man in that position spends two or three times as much as—

PETER STOCKMANN. It just depends on circumstances.

DR. STOCKMANN. At all events I assure you I don't waste money unprofitably. But I can't find it in my heart to deny myself the pleasure of entertaining my friends. I
30 need that sort of thing, you know. I have lived for so long shut out of it all, that it is a necessity of life to me to mix with young, eager, ambitious men, men of liberal and active minds; and that describes every one of those fellows who

20. *civil servant*, a government official.

are enjoying their supper in there. I wish you knew more of Hovstad—

PETER STOCKMANN. By the way, Hovstad was telling me he was going to print another article of yours.

DR. STOCKMANN. An article of mine? 5

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, about the Baths. An article you wrote in the winter.

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, that one! No, I don't intend that to appear just for the present.

PETER STOCKMANN. Why not? It seems to me that this 10 would be the most opportune moment.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, very likely -under normal conditions. [*Crosses the room.*]

PETER STOCKMANN [*following him with his eyes*]. Is there anything abnormal about the present conditions? 15

DR. STOCKMANN [*standing still*]. To tell you the truth, Peter, I can't say just at this moment—at all events not tonight. There may be much that is very abnormal about the present conditions—and it is possible there may be nothing abnormal about them at all. It is quite possible 20 it may be merely my imagination.

PETER STOCKMANN. I must say it all sounds most mysterious. Is there something going on that I am to be kept in ignorance of? I should have imagined that I, as Chairman of the governing body of the Baths— 25

DR. STOCKMANN. And I should have imagined that I —. Oh, come, don't let us fly out at one another, Peter.

PETER STOCKMANN. Heaven forbid! I am not in the habit of flying out at people, as you call it. But I am entitled to request most emphatically that all arrangements 30 shall be made in a business-like manner, through the proper channels, and shall be dealt with by the legally constituted authorities. I can allow no going behind our backs by any roundabout means.

DR. STOCKMANN. Have I ever at any time tried to go behind your backs?

PETER STOCKMANN. You have an ingrained tendency to take your own way, at all events; and that is almost equally inadmissible in a well-ordered community. The individual ought undoubtedly to acquiesce in subordinating himself to the community—or, to speak more accurately, to the authorities who have the care of the community's welfare.

DR. STOCKMANN. Very likely. But what the deuce has all this to do with me?

PETER STOCKMANN. That is exactly what you never appear to be willing to learn, my dear Thomas. But, mark my words, some day you will have to suffer for it—sooner or later. Now I have told you. Goodby.

DR. STOCKMANN. Have you taken leave of your senses? You are on the wrong scent altogether.

PETER STOCKMANN. I am not usually that. You must excuse me now if I— [*calls into the dining-room*]. Good night, Katherine. Good night, gentlemen. [*Goes out.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*coming from the dining-room*]. Has he gone?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and in such a bad temper.

MRS. STOCKMANN. But, dear Thomas, what have you been doing to him again?

DR. STOCKMANN. Nothing at all. And, anyhow, he can't oblige me to make my report before the proper time.

MRS. STOCKMANN. What have you got to make a report to him about?

DR. STOCKMANN. Hm! Leave that to me, Katherine.— It is an extraordinary thing that the postman doesn't come.

[HOVSTAD, BILLING, and HORSTER have risen from the table and come into the sitting-room. EJLIF and MORTEN come in after them.]

BILLING [*stretching himself*]. Ah!—one feels a new man after a meal like that.

HOVSTAD. The mayor wasn't in a very sweet temper to-night, then?

DR. STOCKMANN. It is his stomach; he has a wretched digestion.

HOVSTAD. I rather think it was us two of the *People's Messenger* that he couldn't digest. *is a friend of the*

MRS. STOCKMANN. I thought you came out of it pretty well with him.

10

HOVSTAD. Oh yes; but it isn't anything more than a sort of truce.

BILLING. That is just what it is! That word sums up the situation.

DR. STOCKMANN. We must remember that Peter is a lonely man, poor chap. He has no home comforts of any kind; nothing but everlasting business. And all that infernal weak tea wash that he pours into himself! Now then, my boys, bring chairs up to the table. Aren't we going to have that toddy, Katherine?

20

MRS. STOCKMANN [*going into the dining-room*]. I am just getting it.

DR. STOCKMANN. Sit down here on the couch beside me, Captain Horster. We so seldom see you—Please sit down, my friends. [*They sit down at the table. MRS. STOCKMANN brings a tray, with a spirit-lamp, glasses, bottles, etc., upon it.*]

30

MRS. STOCKMANN. There you are! This is arrack, and this is rum, and this one is the brandy. Now everyone must help himself.

DR. STOCKMANN [*taking a glass*]. We will. [*They all mix themselves some toddy.*] And let us have the cigars. Ejlif, you know where the box is. And you, Morten, can fetch my pipe. [*The two boys go into the room on the right.*] I

have a suspicion that Ejlf pockets a cigar now and then!—
but I take no notice of it. [*Calls out.*] And my smoking-
cap too, Morten. Katherine, you can tell him where I left
it. Ah, he has it. [*The boys bring the various things.*]

5 Now, my friends. I stick to my pipe, you know. This one
has seen plenty of bad weather with me up north. [*Touches
glasses with them.*] Your good health! Ah, it is good to be
sitting snug and warm here.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*who sits knitting*]. Do you sail soon,
10 Captain Horster?

HORSTER. I expect to be ready to sail next week.

MRS. STOCKMANN. I suppose you are going to America?

HORSTER. Yes, that is the plan.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Then you won't be able to take part
15 in the coming election.

HORSTER. Is there going to be an election?

BILLING. Didn't you know?

HORSTER. No, I don't mix myself up with those things.

BILLING. But do you not take an interest in public
20 affairs?

HORSTER. No, I don't know anything about politics.

BILLING. All the same, one ought to vote, at any rate.

HORSTER. Even if one doesn't know anything about
what is going on?

25 BILLING. Doesn't know! What do you mean by that?
A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared
to take the helm. (*To guard the ship*)

HORSTER. Maybe that is all very well on shore; but on
board ship it wouldn't work.

30 HOVSTAD. It is astonishing how little most sailors care
about what goes on on shore.

BILLING. Very extraordinary.

DR. STOCKMANN. Sailors are like birds of passage; they
feel equally at home in any latitude. And that is only an

additional reason for our being all the more keen, Hovstad. Is there to be anything of public interest in tomorrow's *Messenger*?

HOVSTAD. Nothing about municipal affairs. But the day after tomorrow I was thinking of printing your article— 5

DR. STOCKMANN. Ah, devil take it —my article! Look here, that must wait a bit.

HOVSTAD. Really? We had just got convenient space for it, and I thought it was just the opportune moment —

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, yes, very likely you are right; 10 but it must wait all the same. I will explain to you later.

[PETRA comes in from the hall, in hat and cloak and with a bundle of exercise books under her arm.]

PETRA. Good evening.

DR. STOCKMANN. Good evening, Petra; come along.

[Mutual greetings; PETRA takes off her things and puts them down on a chair by the door.]

PETRA. And you have all been sitting here enjoying yourselves, while I have been out slaving! 15

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, come and enjoy yourself, too!

BILLING. May I mix a glass for you?

PETRA [coming to the table]. Thanks, I would rather do it; you always mix it too strong. But I forgot, father I have a letter for you. [Goes to the chair where she has laid 20 her things.]

DR. STOCKMANN. A letter? From whom?

PETRA [looking in her coat pocket]. The postman gave it to me just as I was going out—

DR. STOCKMANN [getting up and going to her]. And you 25 only give it to me now!

PETRA. I really had not time to run up again. There it is!

DR. STOCKMANN [*seizing the letter*]. Let's see, let's see, child! [*Looks at the address.*] Yes, that's all right!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Is it the one you have been expecting so anxiously, Thomas?

5 DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, it is. I must go to my room now and—Where shall I get a light, Katherine? Is there no lamp in my room again?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, your lamp is already lit on your desk.

10 DR. STOCKMANN. Good, good. Excuse me for a moment—
[*Goes into his study.*]

PETRA. What do you suppose it is, mother?

MRS. STOCKMANN. I don't know; for the last day or two he has always been asking if the postman has not been.

15 BILLING. Probably some country patient.

PETRA. Poor old dad!—he will overwork himself soon.
[*Mixes a glass for herself.*] There, that will taste good!

HOVSTAD. Have you been teaching in the evening school again today?

20 PETRA [*sipping from her glass*]. Two hours.

BILLING. And four hours of school in the morning—

PETRA. Five hours.

MRS. STOCKMANN. And you have still got exercises to correct, I see.

25 PETRA. A whole heap, yes.

HORSTER. You are pretty full up with work, too, it seems to me. .

PETRA. Yes—but that is good. One is so delightfully tired after it.

30 BILLING. Do you like that?

PETRA. Yes, because one sleeps so well then.

MORTEN. You must be dreadfully wicked, Petra.

PETRA. Wicked?

MORTEN. Yes, because you work so much. Mr. Rørlund
35 says work is a punishment for our sins.

EJLIF. Pooh, what a duffer you are, to believe a thing like that!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Come, come, Ejlif!

BILLING [*laughing*]. That's capital!

HOVSTAD. Don't you want to work as hard as that, Morten?

MORTEN. No, indeed I don't.

HOVSTAD. What do you want to be, then?

MORTEN. I should like best to be a viking.

EJLIF. You would have to be a pagan then. 10

MORTEN. Well, I could become a pagan, couldn't I?

BILLING. I agree with you, Morten! My sentiments, exactly.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*signaling to him*]. I am sure that is not true, Mr. Billing. 15

BILLING. Yes, I swear it is! I am a pagan, and I am proud of it. Believe me, before long we shall all be pagans.

MORTEN. And then shall be allowed to do anything we like?

BILLING. Well, you see, Morten— 20

MRS. STOCKMANN. You must go to your room now, boys; I am sure you have some lessons to learn for tomorrow.

EJLIF. I should like so much to stay a little longer—

MRS. STOCKMANN. No, no; away you go, both of you.

[*The boys say good night and go into the room on the left.*]

HOVSTAD. Do you really think it can do the boys any harm to hear such things? 25

MRS. STOCKMANN. I don't know; but I don't like it.

PETRA. But you know, mother, I think you really are wrong about it.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Maybe, but I don't like it—not in our own home. 30

9. *viking*, a member of the pirate crews among the Northmen, who plundered the Scandinavian coasts in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries.

PETRA. There is so much falsehood both at home and at school. At home one must not speak, and at school we have to stand and tell lies to the children.

HORSTER. Tell lies?

5 PETRA. Yes; don't you suppose we have to teach them all sorts of things that we don't believe?

BILLING. That is perfectly true.

PETRA. If only I had the means I would start a school of my own, and it would be conducted on very different
10 lines.

BILLING. Oh, bother the means—!

11 HORSTER. Well if you are thinking of that, Miss Stockmann, I shall be delighted to provide you with a schoolroom. The great big old house my father left me is standing almost empty; there is an immense dining-room downstairs—

PETRA [*laughing*]. Thank you very much; but I am afraid nothing will come of it.

20 HOVSTAD. No, Miss Petra is much more likely to take to journalism, I expect. By the way, have you had time to do anything with that English story you promised to translate for us?

PETRA. No, not yet; but you shall have it in good time.

[DR. STOCKMANN *comes in from his room with an open letter in his hand.*]

25 DR. STOCKMANN [*waving the letter*]. Well, now the town will have something new to talk about, I can tell you!

BILLING. Something new?

MRS. STOCKMANN. What is this?

DR. STOCKMANN. A great discovery, Katherine.

HOVSTAD. Really?

30 MRS. STOCKMANN. A discovery of yours?

DR. STOCKMANN. A discovery of mine. [*Walks up and*

down.] Just let them come saying, as usual, that it is all fancy and a crazy man's imagination! But they will be careful what they say this time, I can tell you!

PETRA. But, father, tell us what it is.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, yes—only give me time, and 5 you shall know all about it. If only I had Peter here now! It just shows how we men can go about forming our judgments, when in reality we are as blind as any moles—

HOVSTAD. What are you driving at, Doctor?

DR. STOCKMANN [*standing still by the table*]. Isn't it the 10 universal opinion that our town is a healthy spot?

HOVSTAD. Certainly.

DR. STOCKMANN. Quite an unusually healthy spot, in fact—a place that deserves to be recommended in the warmest possible manner either for invalids or for people who are 15 well—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, but my dear Thomas—

DR. STOCKMANN. And we have been recommending it and praising it—I have written and written, both in the 20 *Messenger* and in pamphlets—

HOVSTAD. Well, what then?

DR. STOCKMANN. And the Baths—we have called them the “main artery of the town's lifeblood,” the “nerve-center of our town,” and the devil knows what else—

BILLING. “The town's pulsating heart” was the expression 25 I once used on an important occasion—

DR. STOCKMANN. Quite so. Well, do you know what they really are, these great, splendid, much-praised Baths, that have cost so much money—do you know what they are?

HOVSTAD. No, what are they? 30

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, what are they?

DR. STOCKMANN. The whole place is a pesthouse!

PETRA. The Baths, father?

MRS. STOCKMANN [*at the same time*]. Our Baths!

Hovstad. But, Doctor—

Billing. Absolutely incredible!

Dr. Stockmann. The whole Bath establishment is a whited, poisoned sepulcher, I tell you—the gravest possible danger to the public health! All the nastiness up at Mölledal, all that stinking filth, is infecting the water in the conduit-pipes leading to the reservoir; and the same cursed, filthy poison oozes out on the shore to—

Horster. Where the bathing-place is?

10 Dr. Stockmann. Just there.

Hovstad. How do you come to be so certain of all this, Doctor?

Dr. Stockmann. I have investigated the matter most conscientiously. For a long time past I have suspected something of the kind. Last year we had some very strange cases of illness among the visitors—typhoid cases, and cases of gastric fever—

Mrs. Stockmann. Yes, that is quite true.

Dr. Stockmann. At the time, we supposed the visitors had been infected before they came; but later on, in the winter, I began to have a different opinion; and so I set myself to examine the water, as well as I could.

Mrs. Stockmann. Then that is what you have been so busy with?

25 Dr. Stockmann. Indeed I have been busy, Katherine. But here I had none of the necessary scientific apparatus; so I sent samples, both of the drinking-water and of the sea-water, up to the University, to have an accurate analysis made by a chemist.

30 Hovstad. And have you got that?

Dr. Stockmann [*showing him the letter*]. Here it is! It proves the presence of decomposing organic matter in the water—it is full of infusoria. The water is absolutely dangerous to use, either internally or externally.

MRS. STOCKMANN. What a mercy you discovered it in time!

DR. STOCKMANN. You may well say so.

HOVSTAD. And what do you propose to do now, Doctor?

DR. STOCKMANN. To see the matter put right—naturally.

HOVSTAD. Can that be done? 5

DR. STOCKMANN. It must be done. Otherwise the Baths will be absolutely useless and wasted. But we need not anticipate that; I have a very clear idea what we shall have to do.

MRS. STOCKMANN. But why have you kept this all so 10 secret, dear?

DR. STOCKMANN. Do you suppose I was going to run about the town gossiping about it, before I had absolute proof? No, thank you. I am not such a fool.

PETRA. Still, you might have told us— 15

DR. STOCKMANN. Not a living soul. But tomorrow you may run round to the old Badger—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh, Thomas! Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, to your grandfather, then. The old boy will have something to be astonished at! I 20 know he thinks I am cracked—and there are lots of other people think so too, I have noticed. But now these good folks shall see—they shall just see—! [*Walks about, rubbing his hands.*] There will be a nice upset in the town, Katherine; you can't imagine what it will be. All the conduit-pipes will 25 have to be relaid.

HOVSTAD [*getting up*]. All the conduit-pipes—?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, of course. The intake is too low down; it will have to be lifted to a position much higher up. 30

PETRA. Then you were right after all.

DR. STOCKMANN. Ah, you remember, Petra—I wrote opposing the plans before the work was begun. But at that time no one would listen to me. Well, I am going to let

them have it, now! Of course I have prepared a report for the Baths Committee; I have had it ready for a week, and was only waiting for this to come. [*Shows the letter.*] Now it shall go off at once. [*Goes into his room and comes back with some papers.*] Look at that! Four closely written sheets!—and the letter shall go with them. Give me a bit of paper, Katherine—something to wrap them up in. That will do! Now give it to—to—[*stamps his foot*!—what the deuce is her name?—give it to the maid, and tell her to take it at once to the Mayor.

[*MRS. STOCKMANN takes the packet and goes out through the dining-room.*]

PETRA. What do you think Uncle Peter will say, father?

DR. STOCKMANN. What is there for him to say? I should think he would be very glad that such an important truth has been brought to light.

15 HOVSTAD. Will you let me print a short note about your discovery in the *Messenger*?

DR. STOCKMANN. I shall be very much obliged if you will.

HOVSTAD. It is very desirable that the public should be informed of it without delay.

20 DR. STOCKMANN. Certainly.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*coming back*]. She has just gone with it.

BILLING. Upon my soul, Doctor, you are going to be the foremost man in the town!

25 DR. STOCKMANN [*walking about happily*]. Nonsense! As a matter of fact I have done nothing more than my duty. I have only made a lucky find—that's all. Still, all the same—

BILLING. Hovstad, don't you think the town ought to give Dr. Stockmann some sort of testimonial?

30 HOVSTAD. I will suggest it, anyway.

BILLING. And I will speak to Aslaksen about it.

DR. STOCKMANN. No, my good friends, don't let us have any of that nonsense. I won't hear of anything of the kind. And if the Baths Committee should think of voting me an increase of salary, I will not accept it. Do you hear, Katherine?—I won't accept it.

MRS. STOCKMANN. You are quite right, Thomas.

PETRA [*lifting her glass*]. Your health, father!

HOVSTAD and BILLING. Your health, Doctor! Good health!

HORSTER [*touches glasses with DR. STOCKMANN*]. I hope it will bring you nothing but good luck.

DR. STOCKMANN. Thank you, thank you, my dear fellows! I feel tremendously happy! It is a splendid thing for a man to be able to feel that he has done a service to his native town and to his fellow-citizens. Hurrah, Katherine!

[*He puts his arms round her and whirls her round and round, while she protests with laughing cries. They all laugh, clap their hands, and cheer the DOCTOR. The boys put their heads in at the door to see what is going on.*]

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. How does the stage setting help to introduce one to the play itself?
2. Briefly summarize the main situation in Act I.
3. What is the conflict to be in this play? Where does it begin?
4. Comment on the first act on the basis of William Archer's test: "A good first act should never end in a blank wall. There should always be a window in it with a glimpse of something attractive beyond."
5. What information of importance do you find in the first few pages of the conversation?

6. On the basis of the conversation in the first act give your estimate of each of the characters appearing.

7. Why does Dr. Stockmann dislike his brother? Why is he so delighted over his discovery of the condition of the Baths?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. BILLINGS (page 322): "A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm."

2. Contrast between Dr. Stockmann and his brother.

3. A character sketch of Petra.

ACT II

SCENE—*The same. The door into the dining-room is shut. It is morning. [MRS. STOCKMANN, with a sealed letter in her hand, comes in from the dining-room, goes to the door of the DOCTOR'S study, and peeps in].*

MRS. STOCKMANN. Are you in, Thomas?

DR. STOCKMANN [*from within his room*]. Yes, I have just come in. [*Comes into the room*]. What is it?

MRS. STOCKMANN. A letter from your brother.

5 DR. STOCKMANN. Aha, let us see! [*Opens the letter and reads:*] "I return herewith the manuscript you sent me"— [*reads on in a low murmur*]. Hm!—

MRS. STOCKMANN. What does he say?

DR. STOCKMANN [*putting the papers in his pocket*]. Oh,
10 he only writes that he will come up here himself about midday.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Well, try to remember to be at home this time.

DR. STOCKMANN. That will be all right; I have got
15 through all my morning visits.

MRS. STOCKMANN. I am extremely curious to know how he takes it.

DR. STOCKMANN. You will see he won't like it's having been I, and not he, that made the discovery.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Aren't you a little nervous about that?

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, he really will be pleased enough, 5 you know. But, at the same time, Peter is so confoundedly afraid of anyone's doing any service to the town except himself.

MRS. STOCKMANN. I will tell you what, Thomas—you should be good-natured, and share the credit of this with 10 him. Couldn't you make out that it was he who set you on the scent of this discovery?

DR. STOCKMANN. I am quite willing. If only I can get the thing set right. I—

[MORTEN KIIL *puts his head in through the door leading from the hall, looks round in an inquiring manner, and chuckles*].

MORTEN KIIL [*slyly*]. Is it—is it true?

15

MRS. STOCKMANN [*going to the door*]. Father!—is it you?

DR. STOCKMANN. Ah, Mr. Kiil—good morning, good morning!

MRS. STOCKMANN. But come along in.

MORTEN KIIL. If it is true, I will; if not, I am off.

20

DR. STOCKMANN. If what is true?

MORTEN KIIL. This tale about the water supply. Is it true?

DR. STOCKMANN. Certainly it is true. But how did you come to hear it?

25

MORTEN KIIL [*coming in*]. Petra ran in on her way to the school—

DR. STOCKMANN. Did she?

MORTEN KIIL. Yes; and she declares that— I thought she was only making a fool of me, but it isn't like Petra to 30 do that.

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course not. How could you imagine such a thing!

MORTEN KIIL. Oh well, it is better never to trust anybody; you may find you have been made a fool of before
5 you know where you are. But it is really true, all the same?

DR. STOCKMANN. You can depend upon it that it is true. Won't you sit down? [*Settles him on the couch.*] Isn't it a real bit of luck for the town—

10 MORTEN KIIL [*suppressing his laughter*]. A bit of luck for the town?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, that I made the discovery in good time.

MORTEN KIIL [*as before*]. Yes, yes, yes!—But I should
15 never have thought you the sort of man to pull your own brother's leg like this!

DR. STOCKMANN. Pull his leg!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Really, father dear—

MORTEN KIIL [*resting his hands and his chin on the handle
20 of his stick and winking slyly at the Doctor*]. Let me see, what was the story? Some kind of beast that had got into the water-pipes, wasn't it?

DR. STOCKMANN. Infusoria—yes.

MORTEN KIIL. And a lot of these beasts had got in,
25 according to Petra—a tremendous lot.

DR. STOCKMANN. Certainly; hundreds of thousands of them, probably.

MORTEN KIIL. But no one can see them—isn't that so?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes; you can't see them.

30 MORTEN KIIL [*with a quiet chuckle*]. Damme—it's the finest story I have ever heard!

DR. STOCKMANN. What do you mean?

MORTEN KIIL. But you will never get the Mayor to believe a thing like that.

DR. STOCKMANN. We shall see.

MORTEN KIIL. Do you think he will be fool enough to—?

DR. STOCKMANN. I hope the whole town will be fools enough.

MORTEN KIIL. The whole town! Well, it wouldn't be a bad thing. It would just serve them right, and teach them a lesson. They think themselves so much cleverer than we old fellows. They hounded me out of the council; they did, I tell you—they hounded me out. Now they shall pay for it. You pull their legs too, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN. Really, I—

MORTEN KIIL. You pull their legs! [*Gets up*]. If you can work it so that the Mayor and his friends all swallow the same bait, I will give ten pounds to a charity—like a shot!

DR. STOCKMANN. That is very kind of you.

MORTEN KIIL. Yes, I haven't got much money to throw away, I can tell you; but if you can work this, I will give five pounds to a charity at Christmas.

[HOVSTAD comes in by the hall door.]

HOVSTAD. Good morning! [*Stops*]. Oh, I beg your pardon—

DR. STOCKMANN. Not at all; come in.

MORTEN KIIL [*with another chuckle*]. Oho!—is he in this, too?

HOVSTAD. What do you mean?

DR. STOCKMANN. Certainly he is.

MORTEN KIIL. I might have known it! It must get into the papers. You know how to do it, Thomas! Set your wits to work. Now I must go.

DR. STOCKMANN. Won't you stay a little while?

MORTEN KIIL. No, I must be off now. You keep up

this game for all it is worth. You won't repent it; I'm damned if you will!

[*He goes out; MRS. STOCKMANN follows him into the hall.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*laughing*]. Just imagine—the old chap doesn't believe a word of all this about the water-supply.

5 HOVSTAD. Oh, that was it, then?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, that was what we were talking about. Perhaps it is the same thing that brings you here?

HOVSTAD. Yes, it is. Can you spare me a few minutes, Doctor?

10 DR. STOCKMANN. As long as you like, my dear fellow.

HOVSTAD. Have you heard from the Mayor yet?

DR. STOCKMANN. Not yet. He is coming here later.

HOVSTAD. I have given the matter a great deal of thought since last night.

15 DR. STOCKMANN. Well?

HOVSTAD. From your point of view, as a doctor and a man of science, this affair of the water-supply is an isolated matter. I mean, you do not realize that it involves a great many other things.

20 DR. STOCKMANN. How do you mean?—Let us sit down, my dear fellow. No, sit here on the couch. [*HOVSTAD sits down on the couch, DR. STOCKMANN on a chair on the other side of the table.*] Now then. You mean that—?

HOVSTAD. You said yesterday that the pollution of the
25 water was due to impurities in the soil.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, unquestionably it is due to that poisonous morass up at Mölledal.

HOVSTAD. Begging your pardon, Doctor, I fancy it is due to quite another morass altogether.

30 DR. STOCKMANN. What morass?

HOVSTAD. The morass that the whole life of our town is built on and is rotting in.

corruption in society.

DR. STOCKMANN. What the deuce are you driving at, Hovstad?

HOVSTAD. The whole of the town's interests have, little by little, got into the hands of a pack of officials.

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, come!—they are not all officials. 5

HOVSTAD. No, but those that are not officials are at any rate the officials' friends and adherents; it is the wealthy folk, the old families in the town, that have got us entirely in their hands.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, but after all they are men of ability 10 and knowledge.

HOVSTAD. Did they show any ability or knowledge when they laid the conduit-pipes where they are now?

DR. STOCKMANN. No, of course that was a great piece of stupidity on their part. But that is going to be set right 15 now.

HOVSTAD. Do you think that will be all such plain sailing?

DR. STOCKMANN. Plain sailing or no, it has got to be done, anyway. 20

HOVSTAD. Yes, provided the press takes up the question.

DR. STOCKMANN. I don't think that will be necessary, my dear fellow. I am certain my brother—

HOVSTAD. Excuse me, doctor; I feel bound to tell you I am inclined to take the matter up. 25

DR. STOCKMANN. In the paper?

HOVSTAD. Yes. When I took over the *People's Messenger* my idea was to break up this ring of self-opinionated old fossils who had got hold of all the influence.

DR. STOCKMANN. But you know you told me yourself 30 what the result had been; you nearly ruined your paper.

HOVSTAD. Yes, at the time we were obliged to climb down a peg or two, it is quite true; because there was a danger of the whole project of the Baths coming to nothing

if they failed us. But now the scheme has been carried through, and we can dispense with these grand gentlemen.

DR. STOCKMANN. Dispense with them, yes; but we owe them a great debt of gratitude.

HOVSTAD. That shall be recognized ungrudgingly. But a journalist of my democratic tendencies cannot let such an opportunity as this slip. The bubble of official infallibility must be pricked. This superstition must be destroyed, like any other.

DR. STOCKMANN. I am whole-heartedly with you in that, Mr. Hovstad; if it is a superstition, away with it!

HOVSTAD. I should be very reluctant to bring the Mayor into it, because he is your brother. But I am sure you will agree with me that truth should be the first consideration.

DR. STOCKMANN. That goes without saying. [*With sudden emphasis.*] Yes, but—but—

HOVSTAD. You must not misjudge me. I am neither more self-interested nor more ambitious than most men.

DR. STOCKMANN. My dear fellow—who suggests anything of the kind?

HOVSTAD. I am of humble origin, as you know; and that has given me opportunities of knowing what is the most crying need in the humbler ranks of life. It is that they should be allowed some part in the direction of public affairs, Doctor. That is what will develop their faculties and intelligence and self-respect—

DR. STOCKMANN. I quite appreciate that.

HOVSTAD. Yes—and in my opinion a journalist incurs a heavy responsibility if he neglects a favorable opportunity of emancipating the masses—the humble and oppressed. I know well enough that in exalted circles I shall be called an agitator, and all that sort of thing; but they may call me what they like. If only my conscience doesn't reproach me, then—

DR. STOCKMANN. Quite right! Quite right, Mr. Hovstad.

But all the same --devil take it! [*A knock is heard at the door.*] Come in!

[*ASLAKSEN appears at the door. He is poorly but decently dressed, in black, with a slightly crumpled white neckcloth; he wears gloves and has a felt hat in his hand.*]

ASLAKSEN [*bowing*]. Excuse my taking the liberty, Doctor—

DR. STOCKMANN [*getting up*]. Ah, it is you, Aslaksen! 5

ASLAKSEN. Yes, doctor.

HOVSTAD [*standing up*]. Is it me you want, Aslaksen?

ASLAKSEN. No; I didn't know I should find you here.

No, it was the Doctor I—

DR. STOCKMANN. I am quite at your service. What is 10 it?

ASLAKSEN. Is what I heard from Mr. Billing true, sir—that you mean to improve our water-supply?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, for the Baths.

ASLAKSEN. Quite so, I understand. Well, I have come 15 to say that I will back that up by every means in my power.

HOVSTAD [*to the Doctor*]. You see!

DR. STOCKMANN. I shall be very grateful to you, but—

ASLAKSEN. Because it may be no bad thing to have us 20 small tradesmen at your back. We form, as it were, a compact majority in the town if we choose. And it is always a good thing to have the majority with you, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. That is undeniably true; but I confess I don't see why such unusual precautions should be necessary 25 in this case. It seems to me that such a plain, straight-forward thing--

ASLAKSEN. Oh, it may be very desirable, all the same. I know our local authorities so well; officials are not generally very ready to act on proposals that come from other people. 30 That is why I think it would not be at all amiss if we made a little demonstration.

HOVSTAD. That's right.

DR. STOCKMANN. Demonstration, did you say? What on earth are you going to make a demonstration about?

ASLAKSEN. We shall proceed with the greatest moderation, Doctor. Moderation is always my aim; it is the greatest virtue in a citizen—at least, I think so.

DR. STOCKMANN. It is well known to be a characteristic of yours, Mr. Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. Yes, I think I may pride myself on that. And this matter of the water-supply is of the greatest importance to us small tradesmen. The Baths promise to be a regular gold-mine for the town. We shall all make our living out of them, especially those of us who are householders. That is why we will back up the project as strongly as possible. And as I am at present Chairman of the Householders' Association—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes—?

ASLAKSEN. And, what is more, local secretary of the Temperance Society—you know, sir, I suppose, that I am a worker in the temperance cause?

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course, of course.

ASLAKSEN. Well, you can understand that I come into contact with a great many people. And as I have the reputation of a temperate and law-abiding citizen—like yourself, Doctor—I have a certain influence in the town, a little bit of power, if I may be allowed to say so.

DR. STOCKMANN. I know that quite well, Mr. Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. So you see it would be an easy matter for me to set on foot some testimonial, if necessary.

DR. STOCKMANN. A testimonial?

ASLAKSEN. Yes, some kind of an address of thanks from the townsmen for your share in a matter of such importance to the community. I need scarcely say that it would have to be drawn up with the greatest regard to moderation, so

as not to offend the authorities—who, after all, have the reins in their hands. If we pay strict attention to that, no one can take it amiss, I should think!

HOVSTAD. Well, and even supposing they didn't like it—

ASLAKSEN. No, no, no; there must be no discourtesy to the authorities, Mr. Hovstad. It is no use falling foul of those upon whom our welfare so closely depends. I have done that in my time, and no good ever comes of it. But no one can take exception to a reasonable and frank expression of a citizen's views.

10

DR. STOCKMANN [*shaking him by the hand*]. I can't tell you, dear Mr. Aslaksen, how extremely pleased I am to find such hearty support among my fellow-citizens. I am delighted—delighted! Now, you will take a small glass of sherry, eh?

15

ASLAKSEN. No, thank you; I never drink alcohol of that kind.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, what do you say to a glass of beer, then?

ASLAKSEN. Nor that either, thank you, Doctor. I never drink anything as early as this. I am going into town now to talk this over with one or two householders, and prepare the ground.

DR. STOCKMANN. It is tremendously kind of you, Mr. Aslaksen; but I really cannot understand the necessity for all these precautions. It seems to me that the thing should go of itself.

ASLAKSEN. The authorities are somewhat slow to move, Doctor. Far be it from me to seem to blame them—

HOVSTAD. We are going to stir them up in the paper tomorrow, Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. But not violently, I trust, Mr. Hovstad. Proceed with moderation, or you will do nothing with them. You may take my advice; I have gathered my experience in

the school of life. Well, I must say goodbye, Doctor. You know now that we small tradesmen are at your back at all events, like a solid wall. You have the compact majority on your side, Doctor.

5 DR. STOCKMANN. I am very much obliged, dear Mr. Aslaksen. [*Shakes hands with him.*] Goodby, goodby.

ASLAKSEN. Are you going my way, toward the printing-office, Mr. Hovstad?

HOVSTAD. I will come later; I have something to settle
10 up first.

ASLAKSEN. Very well. [*Bows and goes out; STOCKMANN follows him into the hall.*]

HOVSTAD [*as STOCKMANN comes in again*]. Well, what do you think of that, Doctor? Don't you think it is high time
15 we stirred a little life into all this slackness and vacillation and cowardice?

DR. STOCKMANN. Are you referring to Aslaksen?

HOVSTAD. Yes, I am. He is one of those who are floundering in a bog—decent enough fellow though he may be,
20 otherwise. And most of the people here are in just the same case—see-sawing and edging first to one side and then to the other, so overcome with caution and scruple that they never dare to take any decided step.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, but Aslaksen seemed to me so
25 thoroughly well-intentioned.

HOVSTAD. There is one thing I esteem higher than that; and that is for a man to be self-reliant and sure of himself.

DR. STOCKMANN. I think you are perfectly right there.

HOVSTAD. That is why I want to seize this opportunity,
30 and try if I cannot manage to put a little virility into these well-intentioned people for once. The idol of Authority must be shattered in this town. This gross and inexcusable blunder about the water-supply must be brought home to the mind of every municipal voter.

DR. STOCKMANN. Very well; if you are of opinion that it is for the good of the community, so be it. But not until I have had a talk with my brother.

HOVSTAD. Anyway, I will get a leading article ready; and if the Mayor refuses to take the matter up— 5

DR. STOCKMANN. How can you suppose such a thing possible?

HOVSTAD. It is conceivable. And in that case—

DR. STOCKMANN. In that case I promise you— Look here, in that case you may print my report—every word 10 of it.

HOVSTAD. May I? Have I your word for it?

DR. STOCKMANN [*giving him the MS*]. Here it is; take it with you. It can do no harm for you to read it through, and you can give it back later on. 15

HOVSTAD. Good, good! That is what I will do. And now goodbye, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. Goodby, goodby. You will see everything will run quite smoothly, Mr. Hovstad—quite smoothly. 20

HOVSTAD. Hm!—we shall see. [*Bows and goes out.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*opens the dining-room door and looks in*]. Katherine! Oh, you are back, Petra?

PETRA [*coming in*]. Yes, I have just come from the school.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*coming in*]. Has he not been here yet? 25

DR. STOCKMANN. Peter? No. But I have had a long talk with Hovstad. He is quite excited about my discovery. I find it has a much wider bearing than I at first imagined. And he has put his paper at my disposal if necessity should arise. 30

MRS. STOCKMANN. Do you think it will?

DR. STOCKMANN. Not for a moment. But at all events it makes me feel proud to know that I have the liberal-minded, independent press on my side. Yes, and—just

imagine—I have had a visit from the Chairman of the Householders' Association!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh! What did he want?

DR. STOCKMANN. To offer me his support too. They will support me in a body if it should be necessary. Katherine—do you know what I have behind me?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Behind you? No, what have you behind you?

DR. STOCKMANN. The compact majority.

10 MRS. STOCKMANN. Really? Is that a good thing for you, Thomas?

DR. STOCKMANN. I should think it was a good thing. [*Walks up and down rubbing his hands.*] By Jove, it's a fine thing to feel this bond of brotherhood between oneself and
15 one's fellow citizens!

PETRA. And to be able to do so much that is good and useful, father!

DR. STOCKMANN. And for one's own native town into the bargain, my child!

20 MRS. STOCKMANN. That was a ring at the bell.

DR. STOCKMANN. It must be he, then. [*A knock is heard at the door.*] Come in!

PETER STOCKMANN [*comes in from the hall*]. Good morning.

25 DR. STOCKMANN. Glad to see you, Peter!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Good morning, Peter. How are you?

PETER STOCKMANN. So so, thank you. [*To Dr. Stockmann.*] I received from you yesterday, after office hours, a report dealing with the condition of the water at the
30 Baths.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes. Have you read it?

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, I have.

DR. STOCKMANN. And what have you to say to it?

PETER STOCKMANN [*with a sidelong glance*]. Hm!—

MRS. STOCKMANN. Come along, Petra. [*She and PETRA go into the room on the left.*]

PETER STOCKMANN [*after a pause*]. Was it necessary to make all these investigations behind my back?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, because until I was absolutely certain about it—

PETER STOCKMANN. Then you mean that you are absolutely certain now?

DR. STOCKMANN. Surely you are convinced of that.

PETER STOCKMANN. Is it your intention to bring this document before the Baths Committee as a sort of official communication?

DR. STOCKMANN. Certainly. Something must be done in the matter—and that quickly.

PETER STOCKMANN. As usual, you employ violent expressions in your report. You say, amongst other things, that what we offer visitors in our Baths is a permanent supply of poison.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, can you describe it any other way, Peter? Just think—water that is poisonous, whether you drink it or bathe in it! And this we offer to the poor sick folk who come to us trustfully and pay us at an exorbitant rate to be made well again!

PETER STOCKMANN. And your reasoning leads you to this conclusion, that we must build a sewer to draw off the alleged impurities from Mölledal and must relay the water-conduits.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes. Do you see any other way out of it? I don't.

PETER STOCKMANN. I made a pretext this morning to go and see the town engineer, and, as if only half seriously, broached the subject of these proposals as a thing we might perhaps have to take under consideration some time later on.

DR. STOCKMANN. Some time later on!

PETER STOCKMANN. He smiled at what he considered to be my extravagance, naturally. Have you taken the trouble to consider what your proposed alterations would cost? According to the information I obtained, the expenses
5 would probably mount up to fifteen or twenty thousand pounds.

DR. STOCKMANN. Would it cost so much?

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes; and the worst part of it would be that the work would take at least two years.

10 DR. STOCKMANN. Two years? Two whole years?

PETER STOCKMANN. At least. And what are we to do with the Baths in the meantime? Close them? Indeed we should be obliged to. And do you suppose anyone would come near the place after it had got about that the water
15 was dangerous?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, but Peter, that is what it is.

PETER STOCKMANN. And all this at this juncture—just as the Baths are beginning to be known. There are other towns in the neighborhood with qualifications to attract
20 visitors for bathing purposes. Don't you suppose they would immediately strain every nerve to divert the entire stream of strangers to themselves? Unquestionably they would; and then where should we be? We should probably have to abandon the whole thing, which has cost us so much money—
25 and then you would have ruined your native town.

DR. STOCKMANN. I—should have ruined—!

PETER STOCKMANN. It is simply and solely through the Baths that the town has before it any future worth mentioning. You know that just as well as I.

30 DR. STOCKMANN. But what do you think ought to be done, then?

PETER STOCKMANN. Your report has not convinced me that the condition of the water at the Baths is as bad as you represent it to be.

DR. STOCKMANN. I tell you it is even worse!—or at all events it will be in summer, when the warm weather comes.

PETER STOCKMANN. As I said, I believe you exaggerate the matter considerably. A capable physician ought to know what measures to take—he ought to be capable of preventing injurious influences or of remedying them if they become obviously persistent.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well? What more?

PETER STOCKMANN. The water-supply for the Baths is now an established fact, and in consequence must be treated as such. But probably the Committee, at its discretion, will not be disinclined to consider the question of how far it might be possible to introduce certain improvements consistently with a reasonable expenditure.

DR. STOCKMANN. And do you suppose that I will have anything to do with such a piece of trickery as that?

PETER STOCKMANN. Trickery!!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, it would be a trick—a fraud, a lie, a downright crime toward the public, toward the whole community!

PETER STOCKMANN. I have not, as I remarked before, been able to convince myself that there is actually any imminent danger.

DR. STOCKMANN. You have! It is impossible that you should not be convinced. I know I have represented the facts absolutely truthfully and fairly. And you know it very well, Peter, only you won't acknowledge it. It was owing to your action that both the Baths and the water-conduits were built where they are; and that is what you won't acknowledge—that damnable blunder of yours. Pooh!—do you suppose I don't see through you?

PETER STOCKMANN. And even if that were true? If I perhaps guard my reputation somewhat anxiously, it is in the interests of the town. Without moral authority I am

powerless to direct public affairs as seems, to my judgment, to be best for the common good. And on that account—and for various other reasons, too—it appears to me to be a matter of importance that your report should not be delivered to the Committee. In the interests of the public, you must withhold it. Then, later on, I will raise the question and we will do our best, privately; but nothing of this unfortunate affair—not a single word of it—must come to the ears of the public.

10 DR. STOCKMANN. I am afraid you will not be able to prevent that now, my dear Peter.

PETER STOCKMANN. It must and shall be prevented.

DR. STOCKMANN. It is no use, I tell you. There are too many people that know about it.

15 PETER STOCKMANN. That know about it? Who? Surely you don't mean those fellows on the *People's Messenger*?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, they know. The liberal-minded, independent press is going to see that you do your duty.

PETER STOCKMANN [*after a short pause*]. You are an
20 extraordinarily independent man, Thomas. Have you given no thought to the consequences this may have for yourself?

DR. STOCKMANN. Consequences?—for me?

PETER STOCKMANN. For you and yours, yes.

DR. STOCKMANN. What the deuce do you mean?

25 PETER STOCKMANN. I believe I have always behaved in a brotherly way to you—have always been ready to oblige or to help you?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, you have, and I am grateful to you for it.

30 PETER STOCKMANN. There is no need. Indeed, to some extent I was forced to do so—for my own sake. I always hoped that, if I helped to improve your financial position, I should be able to keep some check on you.

DR. STOCKMANN. What!! Then it was only for your
35 own sake—!

PETER STOCKMANN. Up to a certain point, yes. It is painful for a man in an official position to have his nearest relative compromising himself time after time.

DR. STOCKMANN. And do you consider that I do that?

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, unfortunately, you do, without even being aware of it. You have a restless, pugnacious, rebellious disposition. And then there is that disastrous propensity of yours to want to write about every sort of possible and impossible thing. The moment an idea comes into your head, you must needs go and write a newspaper article or a whole pamphlet about it. 10

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, but is it not the duty of a citizen to let the public share in any new ideas he may have?

PETER STOCKMANN. Oh, the public doesn't require any new ideas. The public is best served by the good old-established ideas it already has. 15

DR. STOCKMANN. And that is your honest opinion?

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, and for once I must talk frankly to you. Hitherto I have tried to avoid doing so, because I know how irritable you are; but now I must tell you the truth, Thomas. You have no conception what an amount of harm you do yourself by your impetuosity. You complain of the authorities, you even complain of the government—you are always pulling them to pieces; you insist that you have been neglected and persecuted. But what else can such a cantankerous man as you expect? 25

DR. STOCKMANN. What next! Cantankerous, am I?

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, Thomas, you are an extremely cantankerous man to work with—I know that to my cost. You disregard everything that you ought to have consideration for. You seem completely to forget that it is I you have to thank for your appointment here as medical officer to the Baths— 30

DR. STOCKMANN. I was entitled to it as a matter of course!—I and nobody else! I was the first person to see 35

that the town could be made into a flourishing watering-place, and I was the only one who saw it at that time. I had to fight single-handed in support of the idea for many years; and I wrote and wrote—

5 PETER STOCKMANN. Undoubtedly. But things were not ripe for the scheme then—though, of course, you could not judge of that in your out-of-the-way corner up north. But as soon as the opportune moment came I—and the others—took the matter into our hands—

10 DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and made this mess of all my beautiful plan. It is pretty obvious now what clever fellows you were!

PETER STOCKMANN. To my mind the whole thing only seems to mean that you are seeking another outlet for your
15 combativeness. You want to pick a quarrel with your superiors—an old habit of yours. You cannot put up with any authority over you. You look askance at anyone who occupies a superior official position; you regard him as a personal enemy, and then any stick is good enough to beat
20 him with. But now I have called your attention to the fact that the town's interests are at stake—and, incidentally, my own too. And therefore I must tell you, Thomas, that you will find me inexorable with regard to what I am about to require you to do.

25 DR. STOCKMANN. And what is that?

PETER STOCKMANN. As you have been so indiscreet as to speak of this delicate matter to outsiders, despite the fact that you ought to have treated it as entirely official and confidential, it is obviously impossible to hush it up now. All
30 sorts of rumors will get about directly, and everybody who has a grudge against us will take care to embellish these rumors. So it will be necessary for you to refute them publicly.

DR. STOCKMANN. I! How? I don't understand.

PETER STOCKMANN. What we shall expect is that, after making further investigations, you will come to the conclusion that the matter is not by any means as dangerous or as critical as you imagined in the first instance.

DR. STOCKMANN. Oho! —so that is what you expect! 5

PETER STOCKMANN. And, what is more, we shall expect you to make public profession of your confidence in the Committee and in their readiness to consider fully and conscientiously what steps may be necessary to remedy any possible defects. 10

DR. STOCKMANN. But you will never be able to do that by patching and tinkering at it—never! Take my word for it, Peter; I mean what I say, as deliberately and emphatically as possible.

PETER STOCKMANN. As an officer under the Committee, you have no right to any individual opinion. 15

DR. STOCKMANN [*amazed*]. No right?

PETER STOCKMANN. In your official capacity, no. As a private person, it is quite another matter. But as a subordinate member of the staff of the Baths, you have no right 20 to express any opinion which runs contrary to that of your superiors.

DR. STOCKMANN. This is too much! I, a doctor, a man of science, have no right to—!

PETER STOCKMANN. The matter in hand is not simply a 25 scientific one. It is a complicated matter, and has its economic as well as its technical side.

DR. STOCKMANN. I don't care what it is! I intend to be free to express my opinion on any subject under the sun. 30.

PETER STOCKMANN. As you please—but not on any subject concerning the Baths. That we forbid.

DR. STOCKMANN [*shouting*]. You forbid—! You! A pack of—

PETER STOCKMANN. *I forbid it—I, your chief; and if I forbid it, you have to obey.*

DR. STOCKMANN [*controlling himself*]. Peter—if you were not my brother—

5 PETRA [*throwing open the door*]. Father, you shan't stand this!

MRS. STOCKMANN [*coming in after her*]. Petra, Petra!

PETER STOCKMANN. Oh, so you have been eavesdropping.

MRS. STOCKMANN. You were talking so loud, we couldn't
10 help—

PETRA. Yes, I was listening.

PETER STOCKMANN. Well, after all, I am very glad—

DR. STOCKMANN [*going up to him*]. You were saying something about forbidding and obeying?

15 PETER STOCKMANN. You obliged me to take that tone with you.

DR. STOCKMANN. And so I am to give myself the lie, publicly?

PETER STOCKMANN. We consider it absolutely necessary
20 that you should make some such public statement as I have asked for.

DR. STOCKMANN. And if I do not—obey?

PETER STOCKMANN. Then we shall publish a statement ourselves to reassure the public.

25 DR. STOCKMANN. Very well; but in that case I shall use my pen against you. I stick to what I have said; I will show that I am right and that you are wrong. And what will you do then?

PETER STOCKMANN. Then I shall not be able to prevent
30 your being dismissed.

DR. STOCKMANN. What—?

PETRA. Father—dismissed!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Dismissed!

PETER STOCKMANN. Dismissed from the staff of the

Baths. I shall be obliged to propose that you shall immediately be given notice, and shall not be allowed any further participation in the Baths' affairs.

DR. STOCKMANN. You would dare to do that!

PETER STOCKMANN. It is you that are playing the daring game.

PETRA. Uncle, that is a shameful way to treat a man like father!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Do hold your tongue, Petra!

PETER STOCKMANN [*looking at PETRA*]. Oh, so we volunteer our opinions already, do we? Of course. [*To MRS STOCKMANN.*] Katherine, I imagine you are the most sensible person in this house. Use any influence you may have over your husband, and make him see what this will entail for his family as well as—

DR. STOCKMANN. My family is my own concern and nobody else's!

PETER STOCKMANN. --For his own family, as I was saying, as well as for the town he lives in.

DR. STOCKMANN. It is I who have the real good of the town at heart! I want to lay bare the defects that sooner or later must come to the light of day. I will show whether I love my native town.

PETER STOCKMANN. You, who in your blind obstinacy want to cut off the most important source of the town's welfare?

DR. STOCKMANN. The source is poisoned, man! Are you mad? We are making our living by retailing filth and corruption! The whole of our flourishing municipal life derives its sustenance from a lie!

PETER STOCKMANN. All imagination—or something even worse. The man who can throw out such offensive insinuations about his native town must be an enemy to our community.

DR. STOCKMANN [*going up to him*]. Do you dare to—!

MRS. STOCKMANN [*throwing herself between them*]. Thomas!

PETRA [*catching her father by the arm*]. Don't lose your temper, father!

5 PETER STOCKMANN. I will not expose myself to violence. Now you have had a warning; so reflect on what you owe to yourself and your family. Goodby. [*Goes out.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*walking up and down*]. Am I to put up with such treatment as this? In my own house, Katherine!

10 What do you think of that!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Indeed it is both shameful and absurd, Thomas—

PETRA. If only I could give uncle a piece of my mind—

DR. STOCKMANN. It is my own fault. I ought to have
15 flown out at him long ago!—shown my teeth!—bitten! To hear him call me an enemy to our community! Me! I shall not take that lying down, upon my soul!

MRS. STOCKMANN. But, dear Thomas, your brother has power on his side—

20 DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, but I have right on mine, I tell you.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh yes, right—right. What is the use of having right on your side if you have not might?

PETRA. Oh, mother!—how can you say such a thing!

DR. STOCKMANN. Do you imagine that in a free country
25 it is no use having right on your side? You are absurd, Katherine. Besides, haven't I the liberal-minded, independent press to lead the way, and the compact majority behind me? That is might enough, I should think!

MRS. STOCKMANN. But, good heavens, Thomas, you don't
30 mean to—?

DR. STOCKMANN. Don't mean to what?

MRS. STOCKMANN. To set yourself up in opposition to your brother.

DR. STOCKMANN. In God's name, what else do you sup-
35 pose I should do but take my stand on right and truth?

PETRA. Yes, I was just going to say that.

MRS. STOCKMANN. But it won't do you any earthly good. If they won't do it, they won't.

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, Katherine! Just give me time, and you will see how I will carry the war into their camp. 5

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, you carry the war into their camp, and you get your dismissal—that is what you will do.

DR. STOCKMANN. In any case I shall have done my duty toward the public—toward the community. I, who am called its enemy! 10

MRS. STOCKMANN. But toward your family, Thomas? Toward your own home! Do you think that is doing your duty toward those you have to provide for? 15

PETRA. Ah, don't think always first of us, mother.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh, it is easy for you to talk; you are able to shift for yourself, if need be. But remember the boys, Thomas; and think a little, too, of yourself, and of me—

DR. STOCKMANN. I think you are out of your senses, Katherine! If I were to be such a miserable coward as to go on my knees to Peter and his damned crew, do you suppose I should ever know an hour's peace of mind all my life afterwards? 20

MRS. STOCKMANN. I don't know anything about that; but God preserve us from the peace of mind we shall have, all the same, if you go on defying him! You will find yourself again without means of subsistence, with no income to count upon. I should think we had had enough of that in the old days. Remember that, Thomas; think what that means. 25

DR. STOCKMANN [*collecting himself with a struggle and clenching his fists*]. And this is what this slavery can bring upon a free, honorable man! Isn't it horrible, Katherine? 30

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, it is sinful to treat you so, it is perfectly true. But, good heavens, one has to put up with so much injustice in this world.—There are the boys, Thomas! Look at them! What is to become of them? Oh, no, no, 35

you can never have the heart— [EJLIF and MORTEN have come in while she was speaking, with their schoolbooks in their hands.]

DR. STOCKMANN. The boys—! [*Recovers himself suddenly.*] No, even if the whole world goes to pieces, I will never bow my neck to this yoke! [*Goes toward his room.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*following him*]. Thomas—what are you going to do!

DR. STOCKMANN [*at his door*]. I mean to have the right to look my sons in the face when they are grown men. [*Goes into his room.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*bursting into tears*]. God help us all!

PETRA. Father is splendid! He will not give in.

[*The boys look on in amazement; PETRA signs to them not to speak.*]

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. What is the significance of the conversation at the opening of the act?
2. Summarize briefly the development of the plot in this act.
3. What kind of person does Ibsen present in Morten Kiil? In Aslaksen?
4. What is the important scene in this act?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. ASLAKSEN (page 339): "It is always a good thing to have the majority with you."
2. ASLAKSEN (page 340): "Moderation is always my aim; it is the greatest virtue in a citizen."
3. PETER STOCKMANN (page 349): "The public is best served by the good old-established ideas it already has."

4. PETER STOCKMANN (page 351): "As an officer under the Committee, you have no right to any individual opinion."

5. PETER STOCKMANN (page 353): "The man who can throw out such offensive insinuations about his native town must be an enemy to our community."

6. The "compact majority" in the different walks of life.

7. Dr. Stockmann's duty toward his family and toward his community.



ACT III

SCENE. *The editorial office of the "People's Messenger." The entrance door is on the left-hand side of the back wall; on the right-hand side is another door with glass panels through which the printing-room can be seen. Another door in the right-hand wall. In the middle of the room is a large table covered with papers, newspapers, and books. In the foreground on the left a window, before which stands a desk and a high stool. There are a couple of easy chairs by the table, and other chairs standing along the wall. The room is dingy and uncomfortable; the furniture is old, the chairs stained and torn. [In the printing-room the compositors are seen at work, and a printer is working a hand-press. HOVSTAD is sitting at the desk, writing. BILLING comes in from the right with DR. STOCKMANN'S manuscript in his hand.]*

BILLING. Well, I must say!

HOVSTAD [*still writing*]. Have you read it through?

BILLING [*laying the MS on the desk*]. Yes, indeed I have.

HOVSTAD. Don't you think the Doctor hits them pretty hard?

5

BILLING. Hard? Bless my soul, he's crushing! Every word falls like—how shall I put it?—like the blow of a sledge hammer.

HOVSTAD. Yes, but they are not the people to throw up the sponge at the first blow.

BILLING. That is true; and for that reason we must strike blow upon blow until the whole of this aristocracy
5 tumbles to pieces. As I sat in there reading this, I almost seemed to see a revolution in being.

HOVSTAD [*turning round*]. Hush!—Speak so that Aslaksen cannot hear you.

BILLING [*lowering his voice*]. Aslaksen is a chicken-hearted
10 chap, a coward; there is nothing of the man in him. But this time you will insist on your own way, won't you? You will put the Doctor's article in?

HOVSTAD. Yes, and if the Mayor doesn't like it—

BILLING. That will be the devil of a nuisance.

15 HOVSTAD. Well, fortunately, we can turn the situation to good account, whatever happens. If the Mayor will not fall in with the Doctor's project, he will have all the small tradesmen down on him—the whole of the House-
holders' Association and the rest of them. And if he does
20 fall in with it, he will fall out with the whole crowd of large shareholders in the Baths, who up to now have been his most valuable supporters—

BILLING. Yes, because they will certainly have to fork out a pretty penny—

25 HOVSTAD. Yes, you may be sure they will. And in this way the ring will be broken up, you see, and then in every issue of the paper we will enlighten the public on the Mayor's incapability on one point and another, and make it clear that all the positions of trust in the town, the whole control of
30 municipal affairs, ought to be put in the hands of the Liberals.

BILLING. That is perfectly true! I see it coming—I see it coming; we are on the threshold of a revolution!

[*A knock is heard at the door.*]

HOVSTAD. Hush! [*Calls out.*] Come in! [Dr. STOCKMANN comes in by the street door. HOVSTAD goes to meet him.] Ah, it is you, Doctor! Well?

DR. STOCKMANN. You may set to work and print it, Mr. Hovstad! 5

HOVSTAD. Has it come to that, then? .

BILLING. Hurrah!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, print away. Undoubtedly it has come to that. Now they must take what they get. There is going to be a fight in the town, Mr. Billing! 10

BILLING. War to the knife, I hope! We will set our knives to their throats, Doctor!

DR. STOCKMANN. This article is only a beginning. I have already four or five more sketched out in my head. Where is Aslaksen? 15

BILLING [*calls into the printing-room*]. Aslaksen, just come here for a minute!

HOVSTAD. Four or five more articles, did you say? On the same subject?

DR. STOCKMANN. No—far from it, my dear fellow. No, 20 they are about quite another matter. But they all spring from the question of the water-supply and the drainage. One thing leads to another, you know. It is like beginning to pull down an old house, exactly.

BILLING. Upon my soul, it's true; you find you are not 25 done till you have pulled all the old rubbish down.

ASLAKSEN [*coming in*]. Pulled down? You are not thinking of pulling down the Baths surely, Doctor?

HOVSTAD. Far from it, don't be afraid.

DR. STOCKMANN. No, we meant something quite different. 30 Well, what do you think of my article, Mr. Hovstad?

HOVSTAD. I think it is simply a masterpiece—

DR. STOCKMANN. Do you really think so? Well, I am very pleased, very pleased.

HOVSTAD. It is so clear and intelligible. One need have no special knowledge to understand the bearing of it. You will have every enlightened man on your side.

ASLAKSEN. And every prudent man too, I hope?

5 BILLING. The prudent and the imprudent—almost the whole town.

ASLAKSEN. In that case we may venture to print it.

DR. STOCKMANN. I should think so!

HOVSTAD. We will put it in tomorrow morning.

10 DR. STOCKMANN. Of course—you must not lose a single day. What I wanted to ask you, Mr. Aslaksen, was if you would supervise the printing of it yourself.

ASLAKSEN. With pleasure.

DR. STOCKMANN. Take care of it as if it were a treasure!
15 No misprints—every word is important. I will look in again a little later; perhaps you will be able to let me see a proof. I can't tell you how eager I am to see it in print, and see it burst upon the public—

BILLING. Burst upon them—yes, like a flash of lightning!

20 DR. STOCKMANN. —And to have it submitted to the judgment of my intelligent fellow-townsmen. You cannot imagine what I have gone through today. I have been threatened first with one thing and then with another; they have tried to rob me of my most elementary rights as a
25 man—

BILLING. What! Your rights as a man!

DR. STOCKMANN. —They have tried to degrade me, to make a coward of me, to force me to put personal interests before my most sacred convictions—

30 BILLING. That is too much—I'm damned if it isn't.

HOVSTAD. Oh, you mustn't be surprised at anything from that quarter.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, they will get the worst of it with me; they may assure themselves of that. I shall consider

the *People's Messenger* my sheet anchor now, and every single day I will bombard them with one article after another, like bombshells—

ASLAKSEN. Yes, but—

BILLING. Hurrah!—It is war, it is war!

5

DR. STOCKMANN. I shall smite them to the ground—I shall crush them—I shall break down all their defenses, before the eyes of the honest public! That is what I shall do!

ASLAKSEN. Yes, but in moderation, Doctor—proceed with moderation—

10

BILLING. Not a bit of it, not a bit of it! Don't spare the dynamite!

DR. STOCKMANN. Because it is not merely a question of water-supply and drains now, you know. No—it is the whole of our social life that we have got to purify and dis-
infect—

15

BILLING. Spoken like a deliverer!

DR. STOCKMANN. All the incapables must be turned out, you understand—and that in every walk of life! Endless vistas have opened themselves to my mind's eye today. I cannot see it all quite clearly yet, but I shall in time. Young and vigorous standard-bearers—those are what we need and must seek, my friends; we must have new men in command at all our outposts.

20

BILLING. Hear, hear!

25

DR. STOCKMANN. We only need to stand by one another, and it will all be perfectly easy. The revolution will be launched like a ship that runs smoothly off the stocks. Don't you think so?

HOVSTAD. For my part I think we have now a prospect of getting the municipal authority into the hands where it should lie.

30

ASLAKSEN. And if only we proceed with moderation, I cannot imagine that there will be any risk.

DR. STOCKMANN. Who the devil cares whether there is any risk or not! What I am doing, I am doing in the name of truth and for the sake of my conscience.

HOVSTAD. You are a man who deserves to be supported,
5 Doctor.

ASLAKSEN. Yes, there is no denying that the Doctor is a true friend to the town—a real friend to the community, that he is.

BILLING. Take my word for it, Aslaksen, Dr. Stock-
10 mann is a friend of the people.

ASLAKSEN. I fancy the Householders' Association will make use of that expression before long.

DR. STOCKMANN [*affected, grasps their hands*]. Thank you, thank you, my dear staunch friends. It is very refreshing
15 to me to hear you say that; my brother called me something quite different. By Jove, he shall have it back, with interest! But now I must be off to see a poor devil.— I will come back, as I said. Keep a very careful eye on the manuscript, Aslaks-
sen, and don't for worlds leave out any of my notes of ex-
clamation! Rather put one or two more in! Capital, capital!
20 Well, goodbye for the present—goodby, goodbye!

[*They show him to the door, and bow him out.*]

HOVSTAD. He may prove an invaluable useful man to us.

ASLAKSEN. Yes, so long as he confines himself to this matter of the Baths. But if he goes farther afield, I don't
25 think it would be advisable to follow him.

HOVSTAD. Hm!—that all depends—

BILLING. You are so infernally timid, Aslaksen!

ASLAKSEN. Timid? Yes, when it is a question of the local authorities, I am timid, Mr. Billing; it is a lesson I
30 have learned in the school of experience, let me tell you. But try me in higher politics, in matters that concern the government itself, and then see if I am timid.

BILLING. No, you aren't, I admit. But this is simply contradicting yourself.

ASLAKSEN. I am a man with a conscience, and that is the whole matter. If you attack the government, you don't do the community any harm, anyway; those fellows pay 5 no attention to attacks, you see—they go on just as they are, in spite of them. But *local* authorities are different; they can be turned out, and then perhaps you may get an ignorant lot into office who may do irreparable harm to the householders and everybody else.

HOVSTAD. But what of the education of citizens by self-government—don't you attach any importance to that?

ASLAKSEN. When a man has interests of his own to protect, he cannot think of everything, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD. Then I hope I shall never have interests of 15 my own to protect!

BILLING. Hear, hear!

ASLAKSEN [*with a smile*]. Hm! [*Points to the desk.*] Mr. Sheriff Stensgaard was your predecessor at that editorial desk.

BILLING [*spitting*]. Bah! That turncoat.

HOVSTAD. I am not a weathercock—and never will be.

ASLAKSEN. A politician should never be too certain of anything, Mr. Hovstad. And as for you, Mr. Billing, I should think it is time for you to be taking in a reef or two 25 in your sails, seeing that you are applying for the post of secretary to the Bench.

BILLING. I—!

HOVSTAD. Are you, Billing?

BILLING. Well, yes but you must clearly understand 30 I am only doing it to annoy the bigwigs.

ASLAKSEN. Anyhow, it is no business of mine. But if I am to be accused of timidity and of inconsistency in my principles, this is what I want to point out: my political

past is an open book. I have never changed, except perhaps to become a little more moderate, you see. My heart is still with the people; but I don't deny that my reason has a certain bias toward the authorities—the local ones, I mean.

5 [*Goes into the printing-room.*]

BILLING. Oughtn't we to try and get rid of him, Hovstad?

HOVSTAD. Do you know anyone else who will advance the money for our paper and printing bill?

BILLING. It is an infernal nuisance that we don't possess
10 some capital to trade on.

HOVSTAD [*sitting down at his desk*]. Yes, if we only had that, then—

BILLING. Suppose you were to apply to Dr. Stockmann?

HOVSTAD [*turning over some papers*]. What is the use?
15 He has nothing.

BILLING. No, but he has a warm man in the background, old Morten Kiil—"the Badger," as they call him.

HOVSTAD [*writing*]. Are you so sure *he* has anything?

BILLING. Good Lord, of course he has! And some of
20 it must come to the Stockmanns. Most probably he will do something for the children, at all events.

HOVSTAD [*turning half round*]. Are you counting on that?

BILLING. Counting on it? Of course I am not counting on anything.

25 HOVSTAD. That is right. And I should not count on the secretaryship to the Bench either, if I were you; for I can assure you—you won't get it.

BILLING. Do you think I am not quite aware of that? My object is precisely *not* to get it. A slight of that kind
30 stimulates a man's fighting power—it is like getting a supply of fresh bile—and I am sure one needs that badly enough in a hole-and-corner place like this, where it is so seldom anything happens to stir one up.

HOVSTAD [*writing*]. Quite so, quite so.

BILLING. Ah, I shall be heard of yet!—Now I shall go and write the appeal to the Householders' Association. *[Goes into the room on the right].*

HOVSTAD *[sitting at his desk, biting his penholder, says slowly].* Hm!—that's it, is it. *[A knock is heard.]* Come in! 5
[PETRA comes in by the outer door. HOVSTAD gets up.] What, you!—here?

PETRA. Yes, you must forgive me—

HOVSTAD *[pulling a chair forward].* Won't you sit down?

PETRA. No, thank you; I must go again in a moment. 10

HOVSTAD. Have you come with a message from your father, by any chance?

PETRA. No, I have come on my own account. *[Takes a book out of her coat pocket.]* Here is the English story.

HOVSTAD. Why have you brought it back? 15

PETRA. Because I am not going to translate it.

HOVSTAD. But you promised me faithfully—

PETRA. Yes, but then I had not read it. I don't suppose you have read it either?

HOVSTAD. No, you know quite well I don't understand 20 English; but—

PETRA. Quite so. That is why I wanted to tell you that you must find something else. *[Lays the book on the table.]* You can't use this for the *People's Messenger*.

HOVSTAD. Why not? 25

PETRA. Because it conflicts with all your opinions.

HOVSTAD. Oh, for that matter—

PETRA. You don't understand me. The burden of this story is that there is a supernatural power that looks after the so-called good people in this world and makes everything 30 happen for the best in their case—while all the so-called bad people are punished.

HOVSTAD. Well, but that is all right. That is just what our readers want.

with what the people want.

PETRA. And are you going to be the one to give it to them? For myself, I do not believe a word of it. You know quite well that things do not happen so in reality.

HOVSTAD. You are perfectly right; but an editor cannot
5 always act as he would prefer. He is often obliged to bow to the wishes of the public in unimportant matters. Politics are the most important thing in life—for a newspaper, any-
way; and if I want to carry my public with me on the path that leads to liberty and progress, I must not frighten them
10 away. If they find a moral tale of this sort in the serial at the bottom of the page, they will be all the more ready to read what is printed above it; they feel more secure, as it were.

PETRA. For shame! You would never go and set a snare
15 like that for your readers; you are not a spider!

HOVSTAD [*smiling*]. Thank you for having such a good opinion of me. No; as a matter of fact that is Billing's idea and not mine.

PETRA. Billing's!

20 HOVSTAD. Yes; anyway he propounded that theory here one day. And it is Billing who is so anxious to have that story in the paper; I don't know anything about the book.

PETRA. But how can Billing, with his emancipated views—

25 HOVSTAD. Oh, Billing is a many-sided man. He is applying for the post of secretary to the Bench, too, I hear.

PETRA. I don't believe it, Mr. Hovstad. How could he possibly bring himself to do such a thing?

HOVSTAD. Ah, you must ask him that.

30 PETRA. I should never have thought it of him.

HOVSTAD [*looking more closely at her*]. No? Does it really surprise you so much?

PETRA. Yes. Or perhaps not altogether. Really, I don't quite know—

HOVSTAD. We journalists are not worth much, Miss Stockmann.

PETRA. Do you really mean that?

HOVSTAD. I think so sometimes.

PETRA. Yes, in the ordinary affairs of everyday life, perhaps; I can understand that. But now, when you have taken a weighty matter in hand—

HOVSTAD. This matter of your father's, you mean?

PETRA. Exactly. It seems to me that now you must feel you are a man worth more than most. 10

HOVSTAD. Yes, today I do feel something of that sort.

PETRA. Of course you do, don't you? It is a splendid vocation you have chosen—to smooth the way for the march of unappreciated truths, and new and courageous lines of thought. If it were nothing more than because you stand 15 fearlessly in the open and take up the cause of an injured man—

HOVSTAD. Especially when that injured man is—ahem! —I don't rightly know how to—

PETRA. When that man is so upright and so honest, you mean? 20

HOVSTAD [*more gently*].  Especially when he is your father, I meant.

PETRA [*suddenly checked*]. That?

HOVSTAD. Yes, Petra—Miss Petra. 25

PETRA. Is it *that*, that is first and foremost with you? Not the matter itself? Not the truth? —not my father's big generous heart?

HOVSTAD. Certainly—of course—that, too.

PETRA. No, thank you; you have betrayed yourself, Mr. 30 Hovstad, and now I shall never trust you again in anything.

HOVSTAD. Can you really take it so amiss in me that it is mostly for your sake—?

PETRA. What I am angry with you for, is for not having

been honest with my father. You talked to him as if the truth and the good of the community were what lay nearest to your heart. You have made fools of both my father and me. You are not the man you made yourself out to be. And
5 that I shall never forgive you—never!

HOVSTAD. You ought not to speak so bitterly, Miss Petra—least of all now.

PETRA. Why not now, especially?

HOVSTAD. Because your father cannot do without my
10 help.

PETRA [*looking him up and down*]. Are you that sort of man, too? For shame!

HOVSTAD. No, no, I am not. This came upon me so unexpectedly—you must believe that.

15 PETRA. I know what to believe. Goodby.

ASLAKSEN [*coming from the printing-room, hurriedly and with an air of mystery*]. Damnation, Hovstad!—[*Sees PETRA.*] Oh, this is awkward—

PETRA. There is the book; you must give it to someone
20 else. [*Goes toward the door.*]

HOVSTAD [*following her*]. But, Miss Stockmann—

PETRA. Goodby. [*Goes out.*]

ASLAKSEN. I say—Mr. Hovstad—

HOVSTAD. Well, well!—what is it?

25 ASLAKSEN. The Mayor is outside in the printing-room.

HOVSTAD. The Mayor, did you say?

ASLAKSEN. Yes, he wants to speak to you. He came in by the back door—didn't want to be seen, you understand.

HOVSTAD. What can he want? Wait a bit—I will go
30 myself. [*Goes to the door of the printing-room, opens it, bows, and invites PETER STOCKMANN in.*] Just see, Aslaksen, that no one—

ASLAKSEN. Quite so. [*Goes into the printing-room.*]

PETER STOCKMANN. You did not expect to see me here,
35 Mr. Hovstad?

HOVSTAD. No, I confess I did not.

PETER STOCKMANN [*looking around*]. You are very snug in here—very nice, indeed.

HOVSTAD. Oh—

PETER STOCKMANN. And here I come, without any notice, 5 to take up your time!

HOVSTAD. By all means, Mr. Mayor. I am at your service. But let me relieve you of your— [*takes STOCKMANN'S hat and stick and puts them on a chair*]. Won't you sit down?

PETER STOCKMANN [*sitting down by the table*]. Thank you. 10 [HOVSTAD *sits down*.] I have had an extremely annoying experience today, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD. Really? Ah well, I expect with all the various business you have to attend to—

PETER STOCKMANN. The Medical Officer of the Baths is 15 responsible for what happened today.

HOVSTAD. Indeed? The Doctor?

PETER STOCKMANN. He has addressed a kind of report to the Baths Committee on the subject of certain supposed defects in the Baths. 20

HOVSTAD. Has he, indeed?

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes—has he not told you? I thought he said—

HOVSTAD. Ah, yes—it is true he did mention something about— 25

ASLAKSEN [*coming from the printing-room*]. I ought to have that copy—

HOVSTAD [*angrily*]. Ahem!—there it is on the desk.

ASLAKSEN [*taking it*]. Right.

PETER STOCKMANN. But look there—that is the thing 30 I was speaking of!

ASLAKSEN. Yes, that is the Doctor's article, Mr. Mayor.

HOVSTAD. Oh, is *that* what you were speaking about?

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, that is it. What do you think of it? 35

HOVSTAD. Oh, I am only a layman—and I have only taken a very cursory glance at it.

PETER STOCKMANN. But you are going to print it?

HOVSTAD. I cannot very well refuse a distinguished

5 man—

ASLAKSEN. I have nothing to do with editing the paper, Mr. Mayor—

PETER STOCKMANN. I understand.

ASLAKSEN. I merely print what is put into my hands.

10 PETER STOCKMANN. Quite so.

ASLAKSEN. And so I must—[*moves off toward the printing-room*].

PETER STOCKMANN. No, but wait a moment, Mr. Aslaksen. You will allow me, Mr. Hovstad?

15 HOVSTAD. If you please, Mr. Mayor.

PETER STOCKMANN. You are a discreet and thoughtful man, Mr. Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. I am delighted to hear you think so, sir.

PETER STOCKMANN. And a man of very considerable
20 influence.

ASLAKSEN. Chiefly among the small tradesmen, sir.

PETER STOCKMANN. The small tax-payers are the majority—here as everywhere else.

ASLAKSEN. That is true.

25 PETER STOCKMANN. And I have no doubt you know the general trend of opinion among them, don't you?

ASLAKSEN. Yes, I think I may say I do, Mr. Mayor.

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes. Well, since there is such a praiseworthy spirit of self-sacrifice among the less wealthy
30 citizens of our town—

ASLAKSEN. What?

HOVSTAD. Self-sacrifice?

PETER STOCKMANN. It is pleasing evidence of a public-spirited feeling, extremely pleasing evidence. I might almost

say I hardly expected it. But you have a closer knowledge of public opinion than I.

ASLAKSEN. But, Mr. Mayor—

PETER STOCKMANN. And indeed it is no small sacrifice that the town is going to make. 5

HOVSTAD. The town?

ASLAKSEN. But I don't understand. Is it the Baths—?

PETER STOCKMANN. At a provisional estimate, the alterations that the Medical Officer asserts to be desirable will cost somewhere about twenty thousand pounds. 10

ASLAKSEN. That is a lot of money, but—

PETER STOCKMANN. Of course it will be necessary to raise a municipal loan.

HOVSTAD [*getting up*]. Surely you never mean that the town must pay—? 15

ASLAKSEN. Do you mean that it must come out of the municipal funds?—out of the ill-filled pockets of the small tradesmen?

PETER STOCKMANN. Well, my dear Mr. Aslaksen, where else is the money to come from? 20

ASLAKSEN. The gentlemen who own the Baths ought to provide that.

PETER STOCKMANN. The proprietors of the Baths are not in a position to incur any further expense.

ASLAKSEN. Is that absolutely certain, Mr. Mayor? 25

PETER STOCKMANN. I have satisfied myself that it is so. If the town wants these very extensive alterations, it will have to pay for them.

ASLAKSEN. But, damn it all—I beg your pardon—this is quite another matter, Mr. Hovstad! 30

HOVSTAD. It is, indeed.

PETER STOCKMANN. The most fatal part of it is that we shall be obliged to shut the Baths for a couple of years.

HOVSTAD. Shut them? Shut them altogether?

ASLAKSEN. For two years?

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, the work will take as long as that—at least.

5 ASLAKSEN. I'm damned if we will stand that, Mr. Mayor! What are we householders to live upon in the meantime?

PETER STOCKMANN. Unfortunately that is an extremely difficult question to answer, Mr. Aslaksen. But what would you have us do? Do you suppose we shall have a single visitor in the town, if we go about proclaiming that our
10 water is polluted, that we are living over a plague spot, that the entire town—

ASLAKSEN. And the whole thing is merely imagination?

PETER STOCKMANN. With the best will in the world, I have not been able to come to any other conclusion.

15 ASLAKSEN. Well, then, I must say it is absolutely unjustifiable of Dr. Stockmann—I beg your pardon, Mr. Mayor—

PETER STOCKMANN. What you say is lamentably true, Mr. Aslaksen. My brother has unfortunately always been a
20 headstrong man.

ASLAKSEN. After this, do you mean to give him your support, Mr. Hovstad?

HOVSTAD. Can you suppose for a moment that I—?

PETER STOCKMANN. I have drawn up a short *résumé* of
25 the situation as it appears from a reasonable man's point of view. In it I have indicated how certain possible defects might suitably be remedied without outrunning the resources of the Baths Committee.

HOVSTAD. Have you got it with you, Mr. Mayor?

30 PETER STOCKMANN [*fumbling in his pocket*]. Yes, I brought it with me in case you should—

ASLAKSEN. Good Lord, there he is!

PETER STOCKMANN. Who? My brother?

HOVSTAD. Where? Where?

ASLAKSEN. He has just gone through the printing-room.

PETER STOCKMANN. How unlucky! I don't want to meet him here, and I had still several things to speak to you about.

HOVSTAD [*pointing to the door on the right*]. Go in there for 5 the present.

PETER STOCKMANN. But—?

HOVSTAD. You will only find Billing in there.

ASLAKSEN. Quick, quick, Mr. Mayor—he is just coming.

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, very well; but see that you 10 get rid of him quickly. [*Goes out through the door on the right, which ASLAKSEN opens for him and shuts after him.*]

HOVSTAD. Pretend to be doing something, Aslaksen. [*Sits down and writes. ASLAKSEN begins foraging among a heap of newspapers that are lying on a chair.*] 15

DR. STOCKMANN [*coming in from the printing-room*]. Here I am again. [*Puts down his hat and stick.*]

HOVSTAD [*writing*]. Already, Doctor? Hurry up with what we were speaking about, Aslaksen. We are very pressed for time today. 20

DR. STOCKMANN [*to ASLAKSEN*]. No proof for me to see yet, I hear.

ASLAKSEN [*without turning round*]. You couldn't expect it yet, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. No, no; but I am impatient, as you 25 can understand. I shall not know a moment's peace of mind till I see it in print.

HOVSTAD. Hm!—It will take a good while yet, won't it, Aslaksen?

ASLAKSEN. Yes, I am almost afraid it will. 30

DR. STOCKMANN. All right, my dear friends; I will come back. I do not mind coming back twice if necessary. A matter of such great importance—the welfare of the town at stake—it is no time to shirk trouble. [*Is just going, but*

stops and comes back.] Look here—there is one thing more I want to speak to you about.

HOVSTAD. Excuse me, but could it not wait till some other time?

5 DR. STOCKMANN. I can tell you in half a dozen words. It is only this. When my article is read tomorrow and it is realized that I have been quietly working the whole winter for the welfare of the town—

HOVSTAD. Yes, but, Doctor—

10 DR. STOCKMANN. I know what you are going to say. You don't see how on earth it was any more than my duty—my obvious duty as a citizen. Of course it wasn't; I know that as well as you. But, my fellow citizens, you know—! Good Lord, think of all the good souls who think so highly of me—!

15 ASLAKSEN. Yes, our townsfolk have had a very high opinion of you so far, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and that is just why I am afraid they— Well, this is the point; when this reaches them, especially the poorer classes, and sounds in their ears like a
20 summons to take the town's affairs into their own hands for the future—

HOVSTAD [*getting up*]. Ahem! Doctor, I won't conceal from you the fact—

DR. STOCKMANN. Ah!—I knew there was something in
25 the wind! But I won't hear a word of it. If anything of that sort is being set on foot—

HOVSTAD. Of what sort?

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, whatever it is—whether it is a demonstration in my honor, or a banquet, or a subscription
30 list for some presentation to me—whatever it is, you must promise me solemnly and faithfully to put a stop to it. You too, Mr. Aslaksen; do you understand?

HOVSTAD. You must forgive me, Doctor, but sooner or later we must tell you the plain truth—

[*He is interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. STOCKMANN, who comes in from the street door.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*seeing her husband*]. Just as I thought!

HOVSTAD [*going toward her*]. You, too, Mrs. Stockmann?

DR. STOCKMANN. What on earth do *you* want here, Katherine? 5

MRS. STOCKMANN. I should think you know very well what I want.

HOVSTAD. Won't you sit down? Or perhaps—

MRS. STOCKMANN. No, thank you; don't trouble. And you must not be offended at my coming to fetch my husband; I am the mother of three children, you know. 10

DR. STOCKMANN. Nonsense!—we know all about that.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Well, one would not give you credit for much thought for your wife and children today; if you had had that, you would not have gone and dragged us all 15 into misfortune.

DR. STOCKMANN. Are you out of your senses, Katherine! Because a man has a wife and children, is he not to be allowed to proclaim the truth—is he not to be allowed to be an actively useful citizen—is he not to be allowed to do a service 20 to his native town?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, Thomas—in reason.

ASLAKSEN. Just what I say. Moderation in everything.

MRS. STOCKMANN. And that is why you wrong us, Mr. Hovstad, in enticing my husband away from his home and 25 making a dupe of him in all this.

HOVSTAD. I certainly am making a dupe of no one—

DR. STOCKMANN. Making a dupe of me! Do you suppose I should allow myself to be duped!

MRS. STOCKMANN. It is just what you do. I know quite 30 well you have more brains than anyone in the town, but

you are extremely easily duped, Thomas. [*To Hovstad.*] Please to realize that he loses his post at the Baths if you print what he has written—

ASLAKSEN. What!

5 HOVSTAD. Look here, Doctor—

DR. STOCKMANN [*laughing*]. Ha—ha!—just let them try! No, no—they will take good care not to. I have got the compact majority behind me, let me tell you!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, that is just the worst of it—
10 your having any such horrid thing behind you.

DR. STOCKMANN. Rubbish, Katherine!—Go home and look after your house and leave me to look after the community. How can you be so afraid, when I am so confident and happy? [*Walks up and down, rubbing his hands.*] Truth
15 and the People will win the fight, you may be certain! I see the whole of the broad-minded middle class marching like a victorious army—! [*Stops beside a chair.*] What the deuce is that lying there?

ASLAKSEN. Good Lord!

20 HOVSTAD. Ahem!

DR. STOCKMANN. Here we have the topmost pinnacle of authority! [*Takes the Mayor's official hat carefully between his finger-tips and holds it up in the air.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN. The Mayor's hat!

25 DR. STOCKMANN. And here is the staff of office too. How in the name of all that's wonderful—?

HOVSTAD. Well, you see—

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, I understand. He has been here trying to talk you over. Ha—ha!—he made rather a mis-
30 take there! And as soon as he caught sight of me in the printing-room— [*Bursts out laughing.*] Did he run away, Mr. Aslaksen?

ASLAKSEN [*hurriedly*]. Yes, he ran away, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. Ran away without his stick or his—

Fiddlesticks! Peter doesn't run away and leave his belongings behind him. But what the deuce have you done with him? Ah!—in there, of course. Now you shall see, Katherine!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Thomas -please don't—!

ASLAKSEN. Don't be rash, Doctor.

[DR. STOCKMANN *has put on the Mayor's hat and taken his stick in his hand. He goes up to the door, opens it, and stands with his hand to his hat at the salute. PETER STOCKMANN comes in, red with anger. BILLING follows him.*]

PETER STOCKMANN. What does this tomfoolery mean?

DR. STOCKMANN. Be respectful, my good Peter. I am the chief authority in the town now. [*Walks up and down.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*almost in tears*]. Really, Thomas!

PETER STOCKMANN [*following him about*]. Give me my hat and stick.

DR. STOCKMANN [*in the same tone as before*]. If you are chief constable, let me tell you that I am the Mayor—I am the master of the whole town, please understand!

PETER STOCKMANN. Take off my hat, I tell you. Remember it is part of an official uniform.

DR. STOCKMANN. Pooh! Do you think the newly-awakened, lion-hearted people are going to be frightened by an official hat? There is going to be a revolution in the town tomorrow, let me tell you. You thought you could turn me out; but now I shall turn you out—turn you out of all your various offices. Do you think I cannot? Listen to me. I have triumphant social forces behind me. Hovstad and Billing will thunder in the People's Messenger, and Aslaksen will take the field at the head of the whole Householders' Association—

ASLAKSEN. That I won't, Doctor.

*climax long
is full*

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course you will—

PETER STOCKMANN. Ah!—may I ask then if Mr. Hovstad intends to join this agitation.

HOVSTAD. No, Mr. Mayor.

5 ASLAKSEN. No, Mr. Hovstad is not such a fool as to go and ruin his paper and himself for the sake of an imaginary grievance.

DR. STOCKMANN [*looking round him*]. What does this mean?

10 HOVSTAD. You have represented your case in a false light, Doctor, and therefore I am unable to give you my support.

BILLING. And after what the Mayor was so kind as to tell me just now, I—

15 DR. STOCKMANN. A false light! Leave that part of it to me. Only print my article; I am quite capable of defending it.

HOVSTAD. I am not going to print it. I cannot and will not and dare not print it.

20 DR. STOCKMANN. You dare not? What nonsense!—You are the editor; and an editor controls his paper, I suppose!

ASLAKSEN. No, it is the subscribers, Doctor.

PETER STOCKMANN. Fortunately, yes.

25 ASLAKSEN. It is public opinion—the enlightened public—householders and people of that kind; they control the newspapers.

DR. STOCKMANN [*composedly*]. And I have all these influences against me?

30 ASLAKSEN. Yes, you have. It would mean the absolute ruin of the community if your article were to appear.

DR. STOCKMANN. Indeed!

PETER STOCKMANN. My hat and stick, if you please. [DR. STOCKMANN *takes off the hat and lays it on the table with the stick*. PETER STOCKMANN *takes them up*.] Your author-
35 ity as mayor has come to an untimely end.

DR. STOCKMANN. We have not got to the end yet. [To HOVSTAD.] Then it is quite impossible for you to print my article in the *People's Messenger*?

HOVSTAD. Quite impossible—out of regard for your family as well.

MRS. STOCKMANN. You need not concern yourself about his family, thank you, Mr. Hovstad. *She stands for*

PETER STOCKMANN [taking a paper from his pocket]. It will be sufficient, for the guidance of the public, if this appears. It is an official statement. May I trouble you?

HOVSTAD [taking the paper]. Certainly; I will see that it is printed.

DR. STOCKMANN. But not mine. Do you imagine that you can silence me and stifle the truth! You will not find it so easy as you suppose. Mr. Aslaksen, kindly take my manuscript at once and print it as a pamphlet—at my expense. I will have four hundred copies—no, five—six hundred.

ASLAKSEN. If you offered me its weight in gold, I could not lend my press for any such purpose, Doctor. It would be flying in the face of public opinion. You will not get it printed anywhere in the town.

DR. STOCKMANN. Then give it back to me.

HOVSTAD [giving him the MS]. Here it is.

DR. STOCKMANN [taking his hat and stick]. It shall be made public all the same. I will read it out at a mass-meeting of the townspeople. All my fellow-citizens shall hear the voice of truth!

PETER STOCKMANN. You will not find any public body in the town that will give you the use of their hall for such a purpose.

ASLAKSEN. Not a single one, I am certain.

BILLING. No, I'm damned if you will find one.

MRS. STOCKMANN. But this is too shameful! Why should everyone turn against you like that?

DR. STOCKMANN [*angrily*]. I will tell you why. It is because all the men in this town are old women—like you; they all think of nothing but their families, and never of the community.

5 MRS. STOCKMANN [*putting her arm into his*]. Then I will show them that an—an old woman can be a man for once. I am going to stand by you, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN. Bravely said, Katherine! It shall be made public—as I am a living soul! If I can't hire a hall, I
10 shall hire a drum, and parade the town with it and read it at every street corner.

PETER STOCKMANN. You are surely not such an arrant fool as that!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, I am.

15 ASLAKSEN. You won't find a single man in the whole town to go with you.

BILLING. No, I'm damned if you will.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Don't give in, Thomas. I will tell the boys to go with you.

20 DR. STOCKMANN. That is a splendid idea!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Morten will be delighted; and Ejlf will do whatever he does.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and Petra!—and you too, Katherine!

25 MRS. STOCKMANN. No, I won't do that; but I will stand at the window and watch you; that's what I will do.

DR. STOCKMANN [*puts his arms around her and kisses her*]. Thank you, my dear! Now you and I are going to try a fall, my fine gentlemen! I am going to see whether a pack of
30 cowards can succeed in gagging a patriot who wants to purify society! [*He and his wife go out by the street door.*]

PETER STOCKMANN [*shaking his head seriously*]. Now he has sent *her* out of her senses, too.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. What is the significance of the opening conversation?
2. What is the situation with regard to the Doctor, and how do you explain the change in attitude of the printers?
3. From the point of view of principles, what relation has Petra's refusal to translate the book for the *People's Messenger* to her father's actions?
4. Does the change in Mrs. Stockmann at the close of the act seem consistent to you?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. DOCTOR STOCKMANN (page 378): "An editor controls his paper, I suppose."
ASLAKSEN: "No, it is the subscribers, Doctor."
2. Find in a local newspaper a letter from a subscriber or an editorial suggesting a needed reform or improvement in the community. Discuss this suggestion as to its value and the probable effect on the community if carried out.

ACT IV

SCENE. *A big old-fashioned room in CAPTAIN HORSTER'S house. At the back folding-doors, which are standing open, lead to an anteroom. Three windows in the left-hand wall. In the middle of the opposite wall a platform has been erected. On this is a small table with two candles, a water-bottle and glass, and a bell. The room is lit by lamps placed between the windows. In the foreground on the left there is a table with candles and a chair. To the right is a door and some chairs standing near it. The room is nearly filled with a crowd of townspeople of all sorts, a few women and schoolboys*

being amongst them. People are still streaming in from the back, and the room is soon filled.]

FIRST CITIZEN [*meeting another*]. Hullo, Lamstad! You here, too?

SECOND CITIZEN. I go to every public meeting, I do.

THIRD CITIZEN. Brought your whistle, too, I expect!

5 SECOND CITIZEN. I should think so. Haven't you?

THIRD CITIZEN. Rather! And old Evensen said he was going to bring a cow-horn, he did.

SECOND CITIZEN. Good old Evensen! [*Laughter among the crowd.*]

10 FOURTH CITIZEN [*coming up to them*]. I say, tell me what is going on here tonight.

SECOND CITIZEN. Dr. Stockmann is going to deliver an address attacking the Mayor.

FOURTH CITIZEN. But the Mayor is his brother.

15 FIRST CITIZEN. That doesn't matter; Dr. Stockmann's not the chap to be afraid.

THIRD CITIZEN. But he is in the wrong; it said so in the *People's Messenger*.

SECOND CITIZEN. Yes, I expect he must be in the wrong
20 this time, because neither the Householders' Association nor the Citizens' Club would lend him their hall for his meeting.

FIRST CITIZEN. He couldn't even get the loan of the hall at the Baths.

SECOND CITIZEN. No, I should think not.

25 A MAN IN ANOTHER PART OF THE CROWD. I say—who are we to back up in this?

ANOTHER MAN, BESIDE HIM. Watch Aslaksen, and do as he does.

BILLING [*pushing his way through the crowd, with a writing-case under his arm*]. Excuse me, gentlemen—do you mind
30 letting me through? I am reporting for the *People's Messen-*

ger. Thank you very much! [*He sits down at the table on the left.*]

A WORKMAN. Who was that?

SECOND WORKMAN. Don't you know him? It's Billing, who writes for Aslaksen's paper.

5

[CAPTAIN HORSTER brings in MRS. STOCKMANN and PETRA through the door on the right. EJLIF and MORTEN follow them in.]

HORSTER. I thought you might all sit here; you can slip out easily from here, if things get too lively.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Do you think there will be a disturbance?

HORSTER. One can never tell—with such a crowd. But 10 sit down, and don't be uneasy.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*sitting down*]. It was extremely kind of you to offer my husband the room.

HORSTER. Well, if nobody else would—

PETRA [*who has sat down beside her mother*]. And it was 15 a plucky thing to do, Captain Horster.

HORSTER. Oh, it is not such a great matter as all that.

[HOVSTAD and ASLAKSEN make their way through the crowd.]

ASLAKSEN [*going up to HORSTER*]. Has the Doctor not come yet?

HORSTER. He is waiting in the next room. [*Movement 20 in the crowd by the door at the back.*]

HOVSTAD. Look—here comes the Mayor!

BILLING. Yes, I'm damned if he hasn't come after all!

[PETER STOCKMANN makes his way gradually through the crowd, bows courteously, and takes up a position by the wall on the left. Shortly afterwards DR. STOCKMANN comes in by the right-hand door. He is dressed in a black frock-coat, with

a white tie. There is a little feeble applause, which is hushed down. Silence is obtained.]

DR. STOCKMANN [*in an undertone*]. How do you feel, Katherine?

MRS. STOCKMANN. All right, thank you. [*Lowering her voice.*] Be sure not to lose your temper, Thomas.

5 DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, I know how to control myself. [*Looks at his watch, steps on to the platform, and bows.*] It is a quarter past—so I will begin. [*Takes his MS out of his pocket.*]

ASLAKSEN. I think we ought to elect a chairman first.

10 DR. STOCKMANN. No, it is quite unnecessary.

SOME OF THE CROWD. Yes—yes!

PETER STOCKMANN. I certainly think, too, that we ought to have a chairman.

DR. STOCKMANN. But I have called this meeting to de-
15 liver a lecture, Peter.

PETER STOCKMANN. Dr. Stockmann's lecture may possibly lead to a considerable conflict of opinion.

VOICES IN THE CROWD. A chairman! A chairman!

HOVSTAD. The general wish of the meeting seems to be
20 that a chairman should be elected.

DR. STOCKMANN [*restraining himself*]. Very well—let the meeting have its way.

ASLAKSEN. Will the Mayor be good enough to undertake the task?

25 THREE MEN [*clapping their hands*]. Bravo! Bravo!

PETER STOCKMANN. For various reasons, which you will easily understand, I must beg to be excused. But fortunately we have amongst us a man who, I think, will be acceptable to you all. I refer to the President of the Householders' Association, Mr. Aslaksen.

SEVERAL VOICES. Yes—Aslaksen! Bravo, Aslaksen!

[DR. STOCKMANN takes up his MS and walks up and down the platform.]

ASLAKSEN. Since my fellow-citizens choose to entrust me with this duty, I cannot refuse.

[Loud applause. ASLAKSEN mounts the platform.]

BILLING [writing]. "Mr. Aslaksen was elected with enthusiasm."

ASLAKSEN. And now, as I am in this position, I should 5 like to say a few brief words. I am a quiet and peaceable man, who believes in discreet moderation, and—and—in moderate discretion. All my friends can bear witness to that.

SEVERAL VOICES. That's right! That's right, Aslaksen!

ASLAKSEN. I have learned in the school of life and experi- 10 ence that moderation is the most valuable virtue a citizen can possess—

PETER STOCKMANN. Hear, hear!

ASLAKSEN. —And, moreover, that discretion and modera- 15 tion are what enable a man to be of most service to the community. I would therefore suggest to our esteemed fellow-citizen, who has called this meeting, that he should strive to keep strictly within the bounds of moderation.

A MAN BY THE DOOR. Three cheers for the Moderation Society! 20

A VOICE. Shame!

SEVERAL VOICES. Sh!—Sh!

ASLAKSEN. No interruptions, gentlemen, please! Does anyone wish to make any remarks?

PETER STOCKMANN. Mr. Chairman. 25

ASLAKSEN. The Mayor will address the meeting.

PETER STOCKMANN. In consideration of the close relationship in which, as you all know, I stand to the present Medical Officer of the Baths, I should have preferred not to

5 speak this evening. But my official position with regard to the Baths and my solicitude for the vital interests of the town compel me to bring forward a motion. I venture to presume that there is not a single one of our citizens present who considers it desirable that unreliable and exaggerated accounts of the sanitary condition of the Baths and the town should be spread abroad.

SEVERAL VOICES. No, no! Certainly not! We protest against it!

10 PETER STOCKMANN. Therefore I should like to propose that the meeting should not permit the Medical Officer either to read or to comment on his proposed lecture.

DR. STOCKMANN [*impatiently*]. Not permit—! What the devil—!

15 MRS. STOCKMANN [*coughing*]. Ahem!—ahem!

DR. STOCKMANN [*collecting himself*]. Very well. Go ahead!

PETER STOCKMANN. In my communication to the *People's Messenger*, I have put the essential facts before the public in such a way that every fair-minded citizen can easily form his own opinion. From it you will see that the main result of the Medical Officer's proposals—apart from their constituting a vote of censure on the leading men of the town—would be to saddle the ratepayers with an unnecessary expenditure of at least some thousands of pounds.

[*Sounds of disapproval among the audience, and some catcalls.*]

25 ASLAKSEN [*ringing his bell*]. Silence, please, gentlemen! I beg to support the Mayor's motion. I quite agree with him that there is something behind this agitation started by the Doctor. He talks about the Baths; but it is a revolution he is aiming at—he wants to get the administration of the town put into new hands. No one doubts the honesty of the Doctor's intentions—no one will suggest that there can be any two opinions as to that. I myself am a believer in self-

government for the people, provided it does not fall too heavily on the ratepayers. But that would be the case here; and that is why I will see Dr. Stockmann damned—I beg your pardon—before I go with him in the matter. You can pay too dearly for a thing sometimes; that is my opinion. 5

[*Loud applause on all sides.*]

HOVSTAD. I, too, feel called upon to explain my position. Dr. Stockmann's agitation appeared to be gaining a certain amount of sympathy at first; so I supported it as impartially as I could. But presently we had reason to suspect that we had allowed ourselves to be misled by misrepresentation of the state of affairs— 10

DR. STOCKMANN. Misrepresentation—!

HOVSTAD. Well, let us say a not entirely trustworthy representation. The Mayor's statement has proved that. I hope no one here has any doubt as to my liberal principles; 15 the attitude of the *People's Messenger* toward important political questions is well known to everyone. But the advice of experienced and thoughtful men has convinced me that in purely local matters a newspaper ought to proceed with a certain caution. 20

ASLAKSEN. I entirely agree with the speaker.

HOVSTAD. And, in the matter before us, it is now an undoubted fact that Dr. Stockmann has public opinion against him. Now, what is an editor's first and most obvious duty, gentlemen? Is it not to work in harmony with his 25 readers? Has he not received a sort of tacit mandate to work persistently and assiduously for the welfare of those whose opinions he represents? Or is it possible I am mistaken in that?

VOICES FROM THE CROWD. No, no! You are quite right! 30

HOVSTAD. It has cost me a severe struggle to break with a man in whose house I have been lately a frequent guest—

A man who till today has been able to pride himself on the undivided goodwill of his fellow-citizens—a man whose only, or at all events whose essential, failing is that he is swayed by his heart rather than his head.

5 A FEW SCATTERED VOICES. That is true! Bravo, Stockmann!

HOVSTAD. But my duty to the community obliged me to break with him. And there is another consideration that impels me to oppose him, and, as far as possible, to arrest
10 him on the perilous course he has adopted; that is, consideration for his family—

DR. STOCKMANN. Please stick to the water-supply and drainage!

HOVSTAD. —Consideration, I repeat, for his wife and his
15 children, for whom he has made no provision.

MORTEN. Is that us, mother?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Hush!

ASLAKSEN. I will now put the Mayor's proposition to the vote.

20 DR. STOCKMANN. There is no necessity! Tonight I have no intention of dealing with all that filth down at the Baths. No; I have something quite different to say to you.

PETER STOCKMANN [*aside*]. What is coming now?

A DRUNKEN MAN [*by the entrance door*]. I am a ratepayer!
25 And therefore I have a right to speak, too! And my entire—firm—inconceivable opinion is—

A NUMBER OF VOICES. Be quiet, at the back there!

OTHERS. He is drunk! Turn him out! [*They turn him out.*]

30 DR. STOCKMANN. Am I allowed to speak?

ASLAKSEN [*ringing his bell.*] Dr. Stockmann will address the meeting.

DR. STOCKMANN. I should like to have seen anyone, a few days ago, dare to attempt to silence me as has been done

tonight! I would have defended my sacred rights as a man, like a lion! But now it is all one to me; I have something of even weightier importance to say to you. [*The crowd presses nearer to him, MORTEN KIIL conspicuous among them.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*continuing*]. I have thought and pondered a great deal, these last few days—pondered over such a variety of things that in the end my head seemed too full to hold them—

PETER STOCKMANN [*with a cough*]. Ahem!

DR. STOCKMANN. —But I got them clear in my mind at last, and then I saw the whole situation lucidly. And that is why I am standing here tonight. I have a great revelation to make to you, my fellow-citizens! I will impart to you a discovery of a far wider scope than the trifling matter that our water-supply is poisoned and our medicinal Baths are standing on pestiferous soil.

A NUMBER OF VOICES [*shouting*]. Don't talk about the Baths! We won't hear you! None of that!

DR. STOCKMANN. I have already told you that what I want to speak about is the great discovery I have made lately—the discovery that all the sources of our *moral* life are poisoned and that the whole fabric of our civic community is founded on the pestiferous soil of falsehood.

VOICES OF DISCONCERTED CITIZENS. What is that he says?

PETER STOCKMANN. Such an insinuation—!

ASLAKSEN [*with his hand on his bell*]. I call upon the speaker to moderate his language.

DR. STOCKMANN. I have always loved my native town as a man only can love the home of his youthful days. I was not old when I went away from here; and exile, longing, and memories cast as it were an additional halo over both the town and its inhabitants. [*Some clapping and applause.*] And there I stayed, for many years, in a horrible hole far away up north. When I came into contact with some of the

people that lived scattered about among the rocks, I often thought it would of been more service to the poor half-starved creatures if a veterinary doctor had been sent up there, instead of a man like me. [*Murmurs among the crowd.*]

5 BILLING [*laying down his pen.*] I'm damned if I have ever heard—!

HOVSTAD. It is an insult to a respectable population!

DR. STOCKMANN. Wait a bit! I do not think anyone will charge me with having forgotten my native town up
10 there. I was like one of the eider-ducks brooding on its nest, and what I hatched was—the plans for these Baths. [*Applause and protests.*] And then when fate at last decreed for me the great happiness of coming home again—I assure you, gentlemen, I thought I had nothing more in the world
15 to wish for. Or rather, there was one thing I wished for—eagerly, untiringly, ardently—and that was to be able to be of service to my native town and the good of the community.

PETER STOCKMANN [*looking at the ceiling*]. You chose a strange way of doing it—ahem!

20 DR. STOCKMANN. And so, with my eyes blinded to the real facts, I reveled in happiness. But yesterday morning—no, to be precise, it was yesterday afternoon—the eyes of my mind were opened wide, and the first thing I realized was the colossal stupidity of the authorities— [*Uproar, shouts,*
25 *and laughter.* MRS. STOCKMANN *coughs persistently.*]

PETER STOCKMANN. Mr. Chairman!

ASLAKSEN [*ringing his bell*]. By virtue of my authority—!

DR. STOCKMANN. It is a petty thing to catch me up on
a word, Mr. Aslaksen. What I mean is only that I got scent
30 of the unbelievable piggishness our leading men had been responsible for down at the Baths. I can't stand leading men at any price!—I have had enough of such people in my time. They are like billy-goats in a young plantation; they do mischief everywhere. They stand in a free man's way, which-

ever way he turns, and what I should like best would be to see them exterminated like any other vermin— [*Uproar.*]

PETER STOCKMANN. Mr. Chairman, can we allow such expressions to pass?

ASLAKSEN [*with his hand on his bell*]. Doctor—! 5

DR. STOCKMANN. I cannot understand how it is that I have only now acquired a clear conception of what these gentry are, when I had almost daily before my eyes in this town such an excellent specimen of them—my brother Peter—slow-witted and hide-bound in prejudice— [*Laughter,* 10
uproar, and hisses. MRS. STOCKMANN *sits coughing assiduously.* ASLAKSEN *rings his bell violently.*]

THE DRUNKEN MAN [*who has got in again*]. Is it me he is talking about? My name's Petersen, all right—but devil take me if I— 15

ANGRY VOICES. Turn out that drunken man! Turn him out. [*He is turned out again.*]

PETER STOCKMANN. Who was that person?

FIRST CITIZEN. I don't know who he is, Mr. Mayor.

SECOND CITIZEN. He doesn't belong here. 20

THIRD CITIZEN. I expect he is a navy from over at— [*The rest is inaudible.*]

ASLAKSEN. He had obviously had too much beer.—Proceed, Doctor; but please strive to be moderate in your language. 25

DR. STOCKMANN. Very well, gentlemen, I will say no more about our leading men. And if anyone imagines, from what I have just said, that my object is to attack these people this evening, he is wrong—absolutely wide of the mark. For I cherish the comforting conviction that these 30 parasites—all these venerable relics of a dying school of thought—are most admirably paving the way for their own extinction; they need no doctor's help to hasten their end.

Nor is it folk of that kind who constitute the most pressing danger to the community. It is not they who are most instrumental in poisoning the sources of our moral life and infecting the ground on which we stand. It is not they who
5 are the most dangerous enemies of truth and freedom amongst us.

SHOUTS FROM ALL SIDES. Who then? Who is it? Name! Name!

DR. STOCKMANN. You may depend upon it I shall name
10 them! That is precisely the great discovery I made yesterday. [*Raises his voice.*] The most dangerous enemy of truth and freedom amongst us is the compact majority—yes, the damned compact Liberal majority—that is it! Now you know! [*Tremendous uproar. Most of the crowd are shouting,*
15 *stamping, and hissing. Some of the older men among them exchange stolen glances and seem to be enjoying themselves.* MRS. STOCKMANN gets up, looking anxious. EJLIF and MORTEN advance threateningly upon some schoolboys who are playing pranks. ASLAKSEN rings his bell and begs for silence.
20 HOVSTAD and BILLING both talk at once, but are inaudible. *At last quiet is restored.*]

ASLAKSEN. As chairman, I call upon the speaker to withdraw the ill-considered expressions he has just used.

DR. STOCKMANN. Never, Mr. Aslaksen! It is the major-
25 ity in our community that denies me my freedom and seeks to prevent my speaking the truth.

HOVSTAD. The majority always has right on its side.

BILLING. And truth too, by God!

DR. STOCKMANN. The majority *never* has right on its
30 side. Never, I say! That is one of these social lies against which an independent, intelligent man must wage war. Who is it that constitute the majority of the population in a country? Is it the clever folk or the stupid? I don't imagine you will dispute the fact that at present the stupid people are in

an absolutely overwhelming majority all the world over. But, good Lord!—you can never pretend that it is right that the stupid folk should govern the clever ones! [*Uproar and cries.*] Oh, yes—you can shout me down, I know! but you cannot answer me. The majority has *might* on its side— 5 unfortunately; but *right* it has *not*. I am in the right—I and a few other scattered individuals. The minority is always in the right. [*Renewed uproar.*]

HOVSTAD. Aha!—so Dr. Stockmann has become an aristocrat since the day before yesterday! 10

DR. STOCKMANN. I have already said that I don't intend to waste a word on the puny, narrow-chested, short-winded crew whom we are leaving astern. Pulsating life no longer concerns itself with them. I am thinking of the few, the scattered few amongst us, who have absorbed new and vigorous 15 truths. Such men stand, as it were, at the outposts, so far ahead that the compact majority has not yet been able to come up with them; and there they are fighting for truths that are too newly-born into the world of consciousness to have any considerable number of people on their side as yet. 20

HOVSTAD. So the Doctor is a revolutionary now!

DR. STOCKMANN. Good heavens—of course I am, Mr. Hovstad! I propose to raise a revolution against the lie that the majority has the monopoly of the truth. What sort of truths are they that the majority usually supports? They 25 are truths that are of such advanced age that they are beginning to break up. And if a truth is as old as that, it is also in a fair way to become a lie, gentlemen. [*Laughter and mocking cries.*] Yes, believe me or not, as you like; but truths are by no means as long-lived as Methuselah—as 30 some folk imagine. A normally-constituted truth lives, let us say, as a rule seventeen or eighteen, or at most twenty years; seldom longer. But truths as aged as that are always worn frightfully thin, and nevertheless it is only then that

the majority recognizes them and recommends them to the community as wholesome moral nourishment. There is no great nutritive value in that sort of fare, I can assure you; and, as a doctor, I ought to know. These "majority truths" 5 are like last year's cured meat—like rancid, tainted ham; and they are the origin of the moral scurvy that is rampant in our communities.

ASLAKSEN. It appears to me that the speaker is wandering a long way from his subject.

10 PETER STOCKMANN. I quite agree with the Chairman.

DR. STOCKMANN. Have you gone clean out of your senses, Peter? I am sticking as closely to my subject as I can; for my subject is precisely this, that it is the masses, the majority—this infernal compact majority—that poisons the sources 15 of our moral life and infects the ground we stand on.

HOVSTAD. And all this because the great, broad-minded majority of the people is prudent enough to show deference only to well-ascertained and well-approved truths?

DR. STOCKMANN. Ah, my good Mr. Hovstad, don't talk 20 nonsense about well-ascertained truths! The truths of which the masses now approve are the very truths that the fighters at the outposts held to in the days of our grandfathers. We fighters at the outposts nowadays no longer approve of them; and I do not believe there is any other well-ascertained truth 25 except this, that no community can live a healthy life if it is nourished only on such old marrowless truths.

HOVSTAD. But instead of standing there using vague generalities, it would be interesting if you would tell us what these old marrowless truths are, that we are nourished 30 on.

[Applause from many quarters.]

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, I could give you a whole string of such abominations; but to begin with I will confine myself

to one well-approved truth, which at bottom is a foul lie, but upon which nevertheless Mr. Hovstad and the *People's Messenger* and all the *Messenger's* supporters are nourished.

HOVSTAD. And that is—?

DR. STOCKMANN. That is, the doctrine you have inherited from your forefathers and proclaim thoughtlessly far and wide—the doctrine that the public, the crowd, the masses, are the essential part of the population—that they constitute the People—that the common folk, the ignorant and incomplete element in the community, have the same right to pronounce judgment and to approve, to direct and to govern, as the isolated, intellectually superior personalities in it.

BILLING. Well, damn me if ever I—

HOVSTAD [*at the same time, shouting out*]. Fellow-citizens, take good note of that!

A NUMBER OF VOICES [*angrily*]. Oho!—we are not the People! Only the superior folk are to govern, are they!

A WORKMAN. Turn the fellow out, for talking such rubbish!

ANOTHER. Out with him!

ANOTHER [*calling out*]. Blow your horn, Evensen!

[*A horn is blown loudly, amidst hisses and an angry uproar.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*when the noise has somewhat abated*]. Be reasonable! Can't you stand hearing the voice of truth for once? I don't in the least expect you to agree with me all at once; but I must say I did expect Mr. Hovstad to admit I was right, when he had recovered his composure a little. He claims to be a freethinker—

VOICES [*in murmurs of astonishment*]. Freethinker, did he say? Is Hovstad a freethinker?

HOVSTAD [*shouting*]. Prove it, Dr. Stockmann! When have I said so in print?

DR. STOCKMANN [*reflecting*]. No, confound it, you are right!—you have never had the courage to. Well, I won't

put you in a hole, Mr. Hovstad. Let us say it is I that am the freethinker, then. I am going to prove to you, scientifically, that the *People's Messenger* leads you by the nose in a shameful manner when it tells you that you—that the common people, the crowd, the masses, are the real essence of the People. That is only a newspaper lie, I tell you! The common people are nothing more than the raw material of which a People is made. [*Groans, laughter, and uproar.*] Well, isn't that the case? Isn't there an enormous difference between a well-bred and an ill-bred strain of animals? Take, for instance, a common barn-door hen. What sort of eating do you get from a shriveled up old scrag of a fowl like that? Not much, do you! And what sort of eggs does it lay? A fairly good crow or a raven can lay pretty nearly as good an egg. But take a well-bred Spanish or Japanese hen, or a good pheasant or a turkey—then you will see the difference. Or take the case of dogs, with whom we humans are on such intimate terms. Think first of an ordinary common cur—I mean one of the horrible, coarse-haired, low-bred curs that do nothing but run about the streets. Compare one of these curs with a poodle whose sires for many generations have been bred in a gentleman's house, where they have had the best of food and had the opportunity of hearing soft voices and music. Do you not think that the poodle's brain is developed to quite a different degree from that of the cur? Of course it is. It is puppies of well-bred poodles like that, that showmen train to do incredibly clever tricks—things that a common cur could never learn to do even if it stood on its head. [*Uproar and mocking cries.*]

30 A CITIZEN [*calls out*]. Are you going to make out we are dogs, now?

ANOTHER CITIZEN. We are not animals, Doctor!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes but, bless my soul, we *are*, my friend! It is true we are the finest animals anyone could

wish for; but, even amongst us, exceptionally fine animals are rare. There is a tremendous difference between poodle-men and cur-men. And the amusing part of it is, that Mr. Hovstad quite agrees with me as long as it is a question of four-footed animals—

5

Hovstad. Yes, it is true enough as far as they are concerned.

Dr. Stockmann. Very well. But as soon as I extend the principle and apply it to two-legged animals, Mr. Hovstad stops short. He no longer dares to think independently, or 10 to pursue his ideas to their logical conclusion; so he turns the whole theory upside down and proclaims in the *People's Messenger* that it is the barn-door hens and street curs that are the finest specimens in the menagerie. But that is always the way, as long as a man retains the traces of common 15 origin and has not worked his way up to intellectual distinction.

Hovstad. I lay no claim to any sort of distinction. I am the son of humble countryfolk, and I am proud that the stock I come from is rooted deep among the common people 20 he insults.

Voices. Bravo, Hovstad! Bravo! Bravo!

Dr. Stockmann. The kind of common people I mean are not only to be found low down in the social scale; they crawl and swarm all around us—even in the highest social positions. 25 You have only to look at your own fine, distinguished Mayor! My brother Peter is every bit as plebeian as anyone that walks in two shoes—[laughter and hisses].

Peter Stockmann. I protest against personal allusions of this kind.

30

Dr. Stockmann [imperturbably].—And that, not because he is, like myself, descended from some old rascal of a pirate from Pomerania or thereabouts—because that is who we are descended from—

PETER STOCKMANN. An absurd legend. I deny it!

DR. STOCKMANN.—But because he thinks what his superiors think and holds the same opinions as they. People who do that are, intellectually speaking, common people; and that is why my magnificent brother Peter is in reality so very far from any distinction—and consequently also so far from being liberal-minded.

PETER STOCKMANN. Mr. Chairman—!

HOVSTAD. So it is only the distinguished men that are liberal-minded in this country? We are learning something quite new! [*Laughter.*]

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, that is part of my new discovery, too. And another part of it is that broad-mindedness is almost precisely the same thing as morality. That is why I maintain that it is absolutely inexcusable in the *People's Messenger* to proclaim, day in and day out, the false doctrine that it is the masses, the crowd, the compact majority, that have the monopoly of broad-mindedness and morality—and that vice and corruption and every kind of intellectual depravity are the result of culture, just as all the filth that is draining into our Baths is the result of the tanneries up at Mölledal! [*Uproar and interruptions.* DR. STOCKMANN is undisturbed, and goes on, carried away by his ardor, with a smile.] And yet this same *People's Messenger* can go on preaching that the masses ought to be elevated to higher conditions of life! But, bless my soul, if the *Messenger's* teaching is to be depended upon, this very raising up the masses would mean nothing more or less than setting them straightway upon the paths of depravity! Happily the theory that culture demoralizes is only an old falsehood that our forefathers believed in and we have inherited. No, it is ignorance, poverty, ugly conditions of life, that do the devil's work! In a house which does not get aired and swept every day—my wife Katherine maintains that the

floor ought to be scrubbed as well, but that is a debatable question—in such a house, let me tell you, people will lose within two or three years the power of thinking or acting in a moral manner. Lack of oxygen weakens the conscience. And there must be a plentiful lack of oxygen in very many 5 houses in this town, I should think, judging from the fact that the whole compact majority can be unconscientious enough to wish to build the town's prosperity on a quagmire of falsehood and deceit.

ASLAKSEN. We cannot allow such a grave accusation to 10 be flung at a citizen community.

A CITIZEN. I move that the Chairman direct the speaker to sit down.

VOICES [*angrily*]. Hear, hear! Quite right! Make him sit down! 15

DR. STOCKMANN [*losing his self-control*]. Then I will go and shout the truth at every street corner! I will write it in other towns' newspapers! The whole country shall know what is going on here!

HOVSTAD. It almost seems as if Dr. Stockmann's inten- 20 tion were to ruin the town.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, my native town is so dear to me that I would rather ruin it than see it flourishing upon a lie.

ASLAKSEN. This is really serious. [*Uproar and catcalls.* Mrs. STOCKMANN coughs, but to no purpose; her husband does 25 not listen to her any longer.]

HOVSTAD [*shouting above the din*]. A man must be a public enemy to wish to ruin a whole community.

DR. STOCKMANN [*with growing fervor*]. What does the destruction of a community matter, if it lives on lies! It 30 ought to be razed to the ground, I tell you! All who live by lies ought to be exterminated like vermin! You will end by infecting the whole country; you will bring about such a state of things that the whole country will deserve to be

ruined. And if things come to that pass, I shall say from the bottom of my heart: Let the whole country perish, let all these people be exterminated!

VOICES FROM THE CROWD. That is talking like an out-
5 and-out enemy of the people!

BILLING. There sounded the voice of the people, by all that's holy!

THE WHOLE CROWD [*shouting*]. Yes, yes! He is an enemy of the people! He hates his country! He hates his own
10 people!

ASLAKSEN. Both as a citizen and as an individual, I am profoundly disturbed by what we have had to listen to. Dr. Stockmann has shown himself in a light I should never have dreamed of. I am unhappily obliged to subscribe to the
15 opinion which I have just heard my estimable fellow-citizens utter; and I propose that we should give expression to that opinion in a resolution. I propose a resolution as follows: "This meeting declares that it considers Dr. Thomas Stockmann, Medical Officer of the Baths, to be an enemy of the
20 people." [*A storm of cheers and applause. A number of men surround the DOCTOR and hiss him. MRS. STOCKMANN and PETRA have got up from their seats. MORTEN and EJLIF are fighting the other schoolboys for hissing; some of their elders separate them*].

25 DR. STOCKMANN [*to the men who are hissing him*]. Oh, you fools! I tell you that—

ASLAKSEN [*ringing his bell*]. We cannot hear you now, Doctor. A formal vote is about to be taken; but, out of regard for personal feelings, it shall be by ballot and not
30 verbal. Have you any clean paper, Mr. Billing?

BILLING. I have both blue and white here.

ASLAKSEN [*going to him*]. That will do nicely; we shall get on more quickly that way. Cut it up into small strips—yes, that's it. [*To the meeting*]. Blue means no; white

means yes. I will come round myself and collect votes. [PETER STOCKMANN *leaves the hall*. ASLAKSEN and one or two others go round the room with the slips of paper in their hats.]

FIRST CITIZEN [to HOVSTAD]. I say, what has come to the Doctor? What are we to think of it? 5

HOVSTAD. Oh, you know how headstrong he is.

SECOND CITIZEN [to BILLING]. Billing, you go to their house—have you ever noticed if the fellow drinks?

BILLING. Well I'm hanged if I know what to say. There are always spirits on the table when you go. 10

THIRD CITIZEN. I rather think he goes quite off his head sometimes.

FIRST CITIZEN. I wonder if there is any madness in his family?

BILLING. I shouldn't wonder if there were. 15

FOURTH CITIZEN. No, it is nothing more than sheer malice; he wants to get even with somebody for something or other.

BILLING. Well certainly he suggested a rise in his salary on one occasion lately, and did not get it. 20

THE CITIZENS [together]. Ah!—then it is easy to understand how it is!

THE DRUNKEN MAN [*who has got amongst the audience again*]. I want a blue one, I do! And I want a white one, too! 25

VOICES. It's that drunken chap again! Turn him out!

MORTEN KIIL [*going up to DR. STOCKMANN*]. Well, Stockmann, do you see what these monkey tricks of yours lead to?

DR. STOCKMANN. I have done my duty. 30

MORTEN KIIL. What was that you said about the tanneries at Mølledal?

DR. STOCKMANN. You heard well enough. I said they were the source of all the filth.

MORTEN KIIL. My tannery, too?

DR. STOCKMANN. Unfortunately your tannery is by far the worst.

MORTEN KIIL. Are you going to put that in the papers?

5 DR. STOCKMANN. I shall conceal nothing.

MORTEN KIIL. That may cost you dear, Stockmann.
[Goes out.]

A STOUT MAN [*going up to CAPTAIN HORSTER, without taking any notice of the ladies*]. Well, Captain, so you lend
10 your house to enemies of the people?

HORSTER. I imagine I can do what I like with my own possessions, Mr. Vik.

THE STOUT MAN. Then you can have no objections to my doing the same with mine.

15 HORSTER. What do you mean, sir?

THE STOUT MAN. You shall hear from me in the morning.
[Turns his back on him and moves off.]

PETRA. Was that not your owner, Captain Horster?

HORSTER. Yes, that was Mr. Vik, the ship-owner.

20 ASLAKSEN [*with the voting-papers in his hands, gets up on to the platform and rings his bell*]. Gentlemen, allow me to announce the result. By the votes of everyone here except one person—

A YOUNG MAN. That is the drunk chap!

25 ASLAKSEN. By the votes of everyone here except a tipsy man, this meeting of citizens declares Dr. Thomas Stockmann to be an enemy of the people. [*Shouts and applause.*] Three cheers for our ancient and honorable citizen community! [*Renewed applause.*] Three cheers for our able and energetic
30 Mayor, who has so loyally suppressed the promptings of family feeling! [*Cheers*]. The meeting is dissolved. [*Gets down.*]

BILLING. Three cheers for the Chairman!

THE WHOLE CROWD. Three cheers for Aslaksen! Hurrah!

DR. STOCKMANN. My hat and coat, Petra! Captain, have you room on your ship for passengers to the New World?

HORSTER. For you and yours we will make room, Doctor. 5

DR. STOCKMANN [*as PETRA helps him into his coat*]. Good. Come, Katherine! Come, boys!

MRS. STOCKMANN [*in an undertone*]. Thomas, dear, let us go out by the back way.

DR. STOCKMANN. No back ways for me, Katherine. 10
[*Raising his voice.*] You will hear more of this enemy of the people, before he shakes the dust off his shoes upon you! I am not so forgiving as a certain Person; I do not say: "I forgive you, for ye know not what ye do."

ASLAKSEN [*shouting*]. That is a blasphemous comparison, 15
Dr. Stockmann!

BILLING. It is, by God! It's dreadful for an earnest man to listen to.

A COARSE VOICE. Threatens us now, does he!

OTHER VOICES [*excitedly*]. Let's go and break his windows! 20
Duck him in the fjord!

ANOTHER VOICE. Blow your horn, Evensen! Pip, pip!

[*Horn-blowing, hisses, and wild cries.* DR. STOCKMANN goes out through the hall with his family, HORSTER elbowing a way for them.]

THE WHOLE CROWD [*howling after them as they go*]. Enemy of the People! Enemy of the People!

BILLING [*as he puts his paper together*]. Well, I'm damned 25
if I go and drink toddy with the Stockmanns tonight!

[*The crowd press toward the exit. The uproar continues outside; shouts of "Enemy of the People!" are heard from without.*]

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. By way of summary discuss the different elements which make suspense and develop climax here.
2. Why keep the drunken man on the stage all through the act?
3. What is accomplished by the conversation among the citizens at the opening of the act?
4. Study Dr. Stockmann's actions and his speech in detail here and tell why the people are so antagonistic to him.
5. What strategic advantage does his brother gain early in the meeting?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. A comparison of this scene with the mob scene in *Julius Caesar* with special reference to the changeableness of the mob.
2. DR. STOCKMANN (page 392): "The most dangerous enemy of truth and freedom amongst us is the compact majority."

ACT V

SCENE.—DR. STOCKMANN'S study. *Bookcases and cabinets containing specimens line the walls. At the back is a door leading to the hall; in the foreground on the left, a door leading to the sitting-room. In the right-hand wall are two windows, of which all the panes are broken. The DOCTOR'S desk, littered with books and papers, stands in the middle of the room, which is in disorder. It is morning.*

[DR. STOCKMANN, in dressing-gown, slippers, and a smoking-cap, is bending down and raking with an umbrella under one of the cabinets. After a while he rakes out a stone.]

DR. STOCKMANN [*calling through the open sitting-room door*]. Katherine, I have found another one.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*from the sitting-room*]. Oh, you will find a lot more yet, I expect.

DR. STOCKMANN [*adding the stone to a heap of others on the table*]. I shall treasure these stones as relics. Ejlif and Morten shall look at them every day, and when they are grown up they shall inherit them as heirlooms. [*Rakes about under a bookcase.*] Hasn't—what the deuce is her name?—the girl, you know—hasn't she been to fetch the glazier yet? 10

MRS. STOCKMANN [*coming in*]. Yes, but he said he didn't know if he would be able to come today.

DR. STOCKMANN. You will see he won't dare to come.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Well, that is just what Randine thought—that he didn't dare to, on account of the neighbors. [*Calls into the sitting-room.*] What is it you want, Randine? Give it to me. [*Goes in, and comes out again directly.*] Here is a letter for you, Thomas. 15

DR. STOCKMANN. Let me see it. [*Opens and reads it.*] Ah!—of course. 20

MRS. STOCKMANN. Who is it from?

DR. STOCKMANN. From the landlord. Notice to quit.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Is it possible? Such a nice man—

DR. STOCKMANN [*looking at the letter*]. Does not dare do otherwise, he says. Doesn't like doing it, but dare not do otherwise—on account of his fellow-citizens—out of regard for public opinion. Is in a dependent position—dare not offend certain influential men— 25

MRS. STOCKMANN. There, you see, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, yes, I see well enough; the whole lot of them in the town are cowards; not a man among them dares do anything for fear of the others. [*Throws the letter on to the table.*] But it doesn't matter to us, Katherine. We are going to sail away to the New World, and— 30

MRS. STOCKMANN. But, Thomas, are you sure we are well advised to take this step?

DR. STOCKMANN. Are you suggesting that I should stay here, where they have pilloried me as an enemy of the people—
5 branded me—broken my windows! And just look here, Katherine—they have torn a great rent in my black trousers, too!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Oh, dear!—and they are the best pair you have!

DR. STOCKMANN. You should never wear your best trousers when you go out to fight for freedom and truth. It is not that I care so much about the trousers, you know; you can always sew them up again for me. But that the common
15 herd should dare to make this attack on me, as if they were my equals—that is what I cannot, for the life of me, swallow!

MRS. STOCKMANN. There is no doubt they have behaved very ill to you, Thomas; but is that sufficient reason for our leaving our native country for good and all?

DR. STOCKMANN. If we went to another town, do you
20 suppose we should not find the common people just as insolent as they are here? Depend upon it, there is not much to choose between them. Oh, well, let the curs snap—that is not the worst part of it. The worst is, that from one end of this country to the other every man is the slave of his
25 Party. Although, as far as that goes, I daresay it is not much better in the free West either; the compact majority, and liberal public opinion, and all that infernal old bag of tricks are probably rampant there too. But there things are done on a larger scale, you see. They may kill you, but they
30 won't put you to death by slow torture. They don't squeeze a free man's soul in a vice, as they do here. And, if need be, one can live in solitude. [*Walks up and down.*] If only I knew where there was a virgin forest or a small South Sea island for sale, cheap—

MRS. STOCKMANN. But think of the boys, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN [*standing still*]. What a strange woman you are, Katherine! Would you prefer to have the boys grow up in a society like this? You saw for yourself last night that half the population are out of their minds; and if 5 the other half have not lost their senses, it is because they are mere brutes, with no sense to lose.

MRS. STOCKMANN. But, Thomas dear, the imprudent things you said had something to do with it, you know.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, isn't what I said perfectly true? 10 Don't they turn every idea topsy-turvy? Don't they make a regular hotch-potch of right and wrong? Don't they say that the things I know are true, are lies? The craziest part of it all is the fact of these "liberals," men of full age, going about in crowds imagining that they are the broad-minded 15 party! Did you ever hear anything like it, Katherine!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, yes, it's mad enough of them, certainly; but— [PETRA comes in from the sitting-room.] Back from school already?

PETRA. Yes. I have been given notice of dismissal. 20

MRS. STOCKMANN. Dismissal?

DR. STOCKMANN. You, too?

PETRA. Mrs. Busk gave me my notice; so I thought it was best to go at once.

DR. STOCKMANN. You were perfectly right, too! 25

MRS. STOCKMANN. Who would have thought Mrs. Busk was a woman like that!

PETRA. Mrs. Busk isn't a bit like that, mother; I saw quite plainly how it hurt her to do it. But she didn't dare do otherwise, she said; and so I got my notice. 30

DR. STOCKMANN [*laughing and rubbing his hands*]. She didn't dare do otherwise, either! It's delicious!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Well, after the dreadful scenes last night—

PETRA. It was not only that. Just listen to this, father!

DR. STOCKMANN. Well?

PETRA. Mrs. Busk showed me no less than three letters she received this morning—

5 DR. STOCKMANN. Anonymous, I suppose?

PETRA. Yes.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, because they didn't dare to risk signing their names, Katherine!

PETRA. And two of them were to the effect that a man,
10 who has been our guest here, was declaring last night at the Club that my views on various subjects are extremely emancipated—

DR. STOCKMANN. You did not deny that, I hope?

PETRA. No, you know I wouldn't. Mrs. Busk's own
15 views are tolerably emancipated, when we are alone together; but now that this report about me is being spread, she dare not keep me on any longer.

MRS. STOCKMANN. And someone who had been a guest of ours! That shows you the return you get for your hos-
20 pitality, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN. We won't live in such a disgusting hole any longer. Pack up as quickly as you can, Katherine; the sooner we can get away, the better.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Be quiet—I think I hear someone in
25 the hall. See who it is, Petra.

PETRA [*opening the door*]. Oh, it's you, Captain Horster! Do come in.

HORSTER [*coming in*]. Good morning. I thought I would just come in and see how you were.

30 DR. STOCKMANN [*shaking his hand*]. Thanks—that is really kind of you.

MRS. STOCKMANN. And thank you, too, for helping us through the crowd, Captain Horster.

PETRA. How did you manage to get home again?

HORSTER. Oh, somehow or other. I am fairly strong, and there is more sound than fury about these folk.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, isn't their swinish cowardice astonishing? Look here; I will show you something! There are all the stones they have thrown through my windows. 5 Just look at them! I'm hanged if there are more than two decently large bits of hardstone in the whole heap; the rest are nothing but gravel—wretched little things. And yet they stood out there bawling and swearing that they would do me some violence; but as for *doing* anything—you don't 10 see much of that in this town.)

HORSTER. Just as well for you this time, doctor!

DR. STOCKMANN. True enough. But it makes one angry all the same; because if some day it should be a question of a national fight in real earnest, you will see that public opinion 15 will be in favor of taking to one's heels, and the compact majority will turn tail like a flock of sheep, Captain Horster. That is what is so mournful to think of; it gives me so much concern, that — No, devil take it, it is ridiculous to care about it! They have called me an enemy of the people, so 20 an enemy of the people let me be!

MRS. STOCKMANN. You will never be that, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. Don't swear to that, Katherine. To be called an ugly name may have the same effect as a pin-scratch in the lung. And that hateful name—I can't get 25 quit of it. It is sticking here in the pit of my stomach, eating into me like a corrosive acid. And no magnesia will remove it.

PETRA. Bah!—you should only laugh at them, father.

HORSTER. They will change their minds some day, Doctor. 30

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, Thomas, as sure as you are standing here.

DR. STOCKMANN. Perhaps, when it is too late. Much good may it do them! They may wallow in their filth then

and rue the day when they drove a patriot into exile. When do you sail, Captain Horster?

HORSTER. Hm!—that was just what I had come to speak about—

5 DR. STOCKMANN. Why, has anything gone wrong with the ship?

HORSTER. No; but what has happened is that I am not to sail in it.

PETRA. Do you mean that you have been dismissed from
10 your command?

HORSTER [*smiling*]. Yes, that's just it.

PETRA. You, too.

MRS. STOCKMANN. There, you see, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN. And that for the truth's sake! Oh, if
15 I had thought such a thing possible—

HORSTER. You mustn't take it to heart; I shall be sure to find a job with some ship-owner or other, elsewhere.

DR. STOCKMANN. And that is this man Vik—a wealthy man, independent of everyone and everything—! Shame on
20 him!

HORSTER. He is quite an excellent fellow otherwise; he told me himself he would willingly have kept me on, if only he had dared—

DR. STOCKMANN. But he didn't dare? No, of course not.

25 HORSTER. It is not such an easy matter, he said, for a party man—

DR. STOCKMANN. The worthy man spoke the truth. A party is like a sausage machine; it mashes up all sorts of heads together into the same mincemeat—fatheads and
30 blockheads, all in one mash!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Come, come, Thomas dear!

PETRA [*to HORSTER*]. If only you had not come home with us, things might not have come to this pass.

HORSTER. I do not regret it.

PETRA [*holding out her hand to him*]. Thank you for that!

HORSTER [*to DR. STOCKMANN*]. And so what I came to say was that if you are determined to go away, I have thought of another plan—

DR. STOCKMANN. That's splendid!—if only we can get 5 away at once.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Hush!—wasn't that someone knocking?

PETRA. That is uncle, surely.

DR. STOCKMANN. Aha! [*Calls out.*] Come in! 10

MRS. STOCKMANN. Dear Thomas, promise me definitely—
[PETER STOCKMANN *comes in from the hall.*]

PETER STOCKMANN. Oh, you are engaged. In that case, I will—

DR. STOCKMANN. No, no, come in. 15

PETER STOCKMANN. But I wanted to speak to you alone.

MRS. STOCKMANN. We will go into the sitting-room in the meanwhile.

HORSTER. And I will look in again later.

DR. STOCKMANN. No, go in there with them, Captain 20 Horster; I want to hear more about—

HORSTER. Very well, I will wait, then. [*He follows Mrs. STOCKMANN and PETRA into the sitting-room.*]

DR. STOCKMANN. I daresay you find it rather drafty here today. Put your hat on. 25

PETER STOCKMANN. Thank you, if I may. [*Does so.*] I think I caught cold last night; I stood and shivered—

DR. STOCKMANN. Really? I found it warm enough.

PETER STOCKMANN. I regret that it was not in my power to prevent those excesses last night. 30

DR. STOCKMANN. Have you anything particular to say to me besides that?

PETER STOCKMANN [*taking a big letter from his pocket.*] I have this document for you, from the Baths Committee.

DR. STOCKMANN. My dismissal?

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, dating from today. [*Lays the letter on the table.*] It gives us pain to do it; but, to speak frankly, we dared not do otherwise on account of public
5 opinion.

DR. STOCKMANN [*smiling*]. Dared not? I seem to have heard that word before, today.

PETER STOCKMANN. I must beg you to understand your position clearly. For the future you must not count on any
10 practice whatever in the town.

DR. STOCKMANN. Devil take the practice! But why are you so sure of that?

PETER STOCKMANN. The Householders' Association is circulating a list from house to house. All right-minded citizens
15 are being called upon to give up employing you; and I can assure you that not a single head of a family will risk refusing his signature. They simply dare not.

DR. STOCKMANN. No, no; I don't doubt it. But what then?

20 PETER STOCKMANN. If I might advise you, it would be best to leave the place for a little while—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, the propriety of leaving the place has occurred to me.

PETER STOCKMANN. Good. And then, when you have
25 had six months to think things over, if, after mature consideration, you can persuade yourself to write a few words of regret, acknowledging your error—

DR. STOCKMANN. I might have my appointment restored to me, do you mean?

30 PETER STOCKMANN. Perhaps. It is not at all impossible.

DR. STOCKMANN. But what about public opinion, then? Surely you would not dare to do it on account of public feeling.

PETER STOCKMANN. Public opinion is an extremely mutable thing. And, to be quite candid with you, it is a matter

of great importance to us to have some admission of that sort from you in writing.

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, that's what you are after, is it! I will just trouble you to remember what I said to you lately about foxy tricks of that sort!

5

PETER STOCKMANN. Your position was quite different then. At that time you had reason to suppose you had the whole town at your back—

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and now I feel I have the whole town *on* my back—[*flaring up.*] I would not do it if I had 10 the devil and his dam on my back—! Never, never, I tell you!

PETER STOCKMANN. A man with a family has no right to behave as you do. You have no right to do it, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. I have no right! There is only one 15 single thing in the world a free man has no right to do. Do you know what that is?

PETER STOCKMANN. No.

DR. STOCKMANN. Of course you don't, but I will tell you. A free man has no right to soil himself with filth; he has no 20 right to behave in a way that would justify his spitting in his own face.

PETER STOCKMANN. This sort of thing sounds extremely plausible, of course; and if there were no other explanation for your obstinacy— But as it happens there is. 25

DR. STOCKMANN. What do you mean?

PETER STOCKMANN. You understand very well what I mean. But, as your brother and as a man of discretion, I advise you not to build too much upon expectations and prospects that may so very easily fail you. 30

DR. STOCKMANN. What in the world is all this about?

PETER STOCKMANN. Do you really ask me to believe that you are ignorant of the terms of Mr. Kiil's will?

DR. STOCKMANN. I know that the small amount he pos-

sesses is to go to an institution for indigent old workpeople.
How does that concern me?

PETER STOCKMANN. In the first place, it is by no means a small amount that is in question. Mr. Kiil is a fairly wealthy
5 man.

DR. STOCKMANN. I had no notion of that!

PETER STOCKMANN. Hm!—hadn't you really? Then I suppose you had no notion, either, that a considerable portion of his wealth will come to your children, you and your
10 wife having a life-rent of the capital. Has he never told you so?

DR. STOCKMANN. Never, on my honor! Quite the reverse; he has consistently done nothing but fume at being so unconscionably heavily taxed. But are you perfectly certain of this, Peter?

15 PETER STOCKMANN. I have it from an absolutely reliable source.

DR. STOCKMANN. Then, thank God, Katherine is provided for—and the children too! I must tell her this at once—[*calls out*] Katherine, Katherine!

20 PETER STOCKMANN [*restraining him*]. Hush, don't say a word yet!

MRS. STOCKMANN [*opening the door*]. What is the matter?

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, nothing; you can go back. [*She shuts the door.* DR. STOCKMANN *walks up and down in his excitement.*]
25 Provided for!—Just think of it, we are all provided for! And for life! What a blessed feeling it is to know one is provided for!

PETER STOCKMANN. Yes, but that is just exactly what you are not. Mr. Kiil can alter his will any day he likes.

30 DR. STOCKMANN. But he won't do that, my dear Peter. The "Badger" is much too delighted at my attack on you and your wise friends.

PETER STOCKMANN [*starts and looks intently at him*]. Ah, that throws a light on various things.

DR. STOCKMANN. What things?

PETER STOCKMANN. I see that the whole thing was a combined maneuver on your part and his. These violent, reckless attacks that you have made against the leading men of the town, under the pretense that it was in the name of truth—

DR. STOCKMANN. What about them?

PETER STOCKMANN. I see that they were nothing else than the stipulated price for that vindictive old man's will.

DR. STOCKMANN [*almost speechless*]. Peter—you are the most disgusting plebeian I have ever met in all my life.

PETER STOCKMANN. All is over between us. Your dismissal is irrevocable—we have a weapon against you now. [*Goes out.*]

DR. STOCKMANN. For shame! For shame! [*Calls out.*] Katherine, you must have the floor scrubbed after him! Let—what's her name—devil take it, the girl who has always got soot on her nose—

MRS. STOCKMANN [*in the sitting-room*]. Hush, Thomas, be quiet!

20

PETRA [*coming to the door*]. Father, grandfather is here, asking if he may speak to you alone.

DR. STOCKMANN. Certainly he may. [*Going to the door.*] Come in, Mr. Kiil. [MORTEN KIIL *comes in*. DR. STOCKMANN *shuts the door after him.*] What can I do for you? Won't you sit down? 25

MORTEN KIIL. I won't sit. [*Looks around.*] You look very comfortable here today, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, don't we!

MORTEN KIIL. Very comfortable—plenty of fresh air. I should think you have got enough today of that oxygen you were talking about yesterday. Your conscience must be in splendid order today, I should think. 30

DR. STOCKMANN. It is.

MORTEN KIIL. So I should think. [*Taps his chest.*] Do you know what I have got here?

DR. STOCKMANN. A good conscience, too, I hope.

MORTON KIIL. Bah!—No, it is something better than
5 that. [*He takes a thick pocketbook from his breast-pocket, opens it, and displays a packet of papers.*]

DR. STOCKMANN [*looking at him in astonishment*]. Shares in the Baths?

MORTEN KIIL. They were not difficult to get today.

10 DR. STOCKMANN. And you have been buying—?

MORTEN KIIL. As many as I could pay for.

DR. STOCKMANN. But, my dear Mr. Kiil—consider the state of the Baths' affairs!

MORTEN KIIL. If you behave like a reasonable man, you
15 can soon set the Baths on their feet again.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, you can see for yourself that I have done all I can, but— They are all mad in this town!

MORTEN KIIL. You said yesterday that the worst of this pollution came from my tannery. If that is true, then my
20 grandfather and my father before me, and I myself, for many years past, have been poisoning the town like three destroying angels. Do you think I am going to sit quiet under that reproach?

DR. STOCKMANN. Unfortunately I am afraid you will
25 have to.

MORTEN KIIL. No, thank you. I am jealous of my name and reputation. They call me "the Badger," I am told. A badger is a kind of pig, I believe; but I am not going to give them the right to call me that. I mean to live and die a
30 clean man.

DR. STOCKMANN. And how are you going to set about it?

MORTEN KIIL. You shall cleanse me, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. I!

MORTEN KIIL. Do you know what money I have bought

these shares with? No, of course you can't know—but I will tell you. It is the money that Katherine and Petra and the boys will have when I am gone. Because I have been able to save a little bit after all, you know.

DR. STOCKMANN [*flaring up*]. And you have gone and taken Katherine's money for *this*!

MORTEN KIL. Yes, the whole of the money is invested in the Baths now. And now I just want to see whether you are quite stark, staring mad, Thomas! If you still make out that these animals and other nasty things of that sort come from my tannery, it will be exactly as if you were to flay broad strips of skin from Katherine's body, and Petra's, and the boys'; and no decent man would do that—unless he were mad.

DR. STOCKMANN [*walking up and down*]. Yes, but I am mad; I am mad!

MORTEN KIL. You cannot be so absurdly mad as all that, when it is a question of your wife and children.

DR. STOCKMANN [*standing still in front of him*]. Why couldn't you consult me about it, before you went and bought all that trash?

MORTEN KIL. What is done cannot be undone.

DR. STOCKMANN [*walks about uneasily*]. If only I were not so certain about it—! But I am absolutely convinced that I am right.

MORTEN KIL [*weighing the pocketbook in his hand*]. If you stick to your mad idea, this won't be worth much, you know. [*Puts the pocketbook in his pocket.*]

DR. STOCKMANN. But, hang it all! it might be possible for science to discover some prophylactic, I should think—or some antidote of some kind—

MORTEN KIL. To kill these animals, do you mean?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, or to make them innocuous.

MORTEN KIL. Couldn't you try some rat's-bane?

DR. STOCKMANN. Don't talk nonsense! They all say it is only imagination, you know. Well, let it go at that! Let them have their own way about it! Haven't the ignorant, narrow-minded curs reviled me as an enemy of the people?
5 —and haven't they been ready to tear the clothes off my back too?

MORTEN KIIL. And broken all your windows to pieces!

DR. STOCKMANN. And then there is my duty to my family. I must talk it over with Katherine; she is great on
10 those things.

MORTEN KIIL. That is right; be guided by a reasonable woman's advice.

DR. STOCKMANN [*advancing toward him*]. To think you could do such a preposterous thing! Risking Katherine's
15 money in this way, and putting me in such a horribly painful dilemma! When I look at you, I think I see the devil himself—

MORTEN KIIL. Then I had better go. But I must have an answer from you before two o'clock—yes or no. If it
20 is no, the shares go to a charity, and that this very day.

DR. STOCKMANN. And what does Katherine get?

MORTEN KIIL. Not a halfpenny. [*The door leading to the hall opens, and HOVSTAD and ASLAKSEN make their appearance.*] Look at those two!

25 DR. STOCKMANN [*staring at them*]. What the devil!—have you actually the face to come into my house?

HOVSTAD. Certainly.

ASLAKSEN. We have something to say to you, you see.

MORTEN KIIL [*in a whisper*]. Yes or no—before two
30 o'clock.

ASLAKSEN [*glancing at HOVSTAD*]. Aha! [MORTEN KIIL goes out.]

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, what do you want with me? Be brief.

HOVSTAD. I can quite understand that you are annoyed with us for our attitude at the meeting yesterday—

DR. STOCKMANN. Attitude, do you call it? Yes, it was a charming attitude! I call it weak, womanish—damnably shameful!

HOVSTAD. Call it what you like, we could not do otherwise.

DR. STOCKMANN. You *dared* not do otherwise—isn't that it?

HOVSTAD. Well, if you like to put it that way. 10

ASLAKSEN. But why did you not let us have word of it beforehand?—just a hint to Mr. Hovstad or to me?

DR. STOCKMANN. A hint? Of what?

ASLAKSEN. Of what was behind it all.

DR. STOCKMANN. I don't understand you in the least. 15

ASLAKSEN [*with a confidential nod*]. Oh yes, you do, Dr. Stockmann.

HOVSTAD. It is no good making a mystery of it any longer.

DR. STOCKMANN [*looking first at one of them and then at the other*]. What the devil do you both mean? 20

ASLAKSEN. May I ask if your father-in-law is not going round the town buying up all the shares in the Baths?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, he has been buying Baths shares today; but— 25

ASLAKSEN. It would have been more prudent to get someone else to do it—someone less nearly related to you.

HOVSTAD. And you should not have let your name appear in the affair. There was no need for anyone to know that the attack on the Baths came from you. You ought 30 to have consulted me, Dr. Stockmann.

DR. STOCKMANN [*looks in front of him; then a light seems to dawn on him and he says in amazement:*] Are such things conceivable? Are such things possible?

ASLAKSEN [*with a smile*]. Evidently they are. But it is better to use a little *finesse*, you know.

HOVSTAD. And it is much better to have several persons in a thing of that sort; because the responsibility of
5 each individual is lessened, when there are others with him.

DR. STOCKMANN [*composedly*]. Come to the point, gentlemen. What do you want?

ASLAKSEN. Perhaps Mr. Hovstad had better—

10 HOVSTAD. No, you tell him, Aslaksen.

ASLAKSEN. Well, the fact is that, now we know the bearings of the whole affair, we think we might venture to put the *People's Messenger* at your disposal.

DR. STOCKMANN. Do you dare do that now? What
15 about public opinion? Are you not afraid of a storm breaking upon our heads?

HOVSTAD. We will try to weather it.

ASLAKSEN. And you must be ready to go off quickly on a new tack, Doctor. As soon as your invective has done its
20 work—

DR. STOCKMANN. Do you mean, as soon as my father-in-law and I have got hold of the shares at a low figure?

HOVSTAD. Your reasons for wishing to get the control of the Baths are mainly scientific, I take it.

25 DR. STOCKMANN. Of course; it was for scientific reasons that I persuaded the old "Badger" to stand in with me in the matter. So we will tinker at the conduit-pipes a little, and dig up a little bit of the shore, and it shan't cost the town a sixpence. That will be all right—eh?)

30 HOVSTAD. I think so—if you have the *People's Messenger* behind you.

ASLAKSEN. The Press is a power in a free community, Doctor.

DR. STOCKMANN. Quite so. And so is public opinion.

And you, Mr. Aslaksen—I suppose you will be answerable for the Householders' Association?

ASLAKSEN. Yes, and for the Temperance Society. You may rely on that.

DR. STOCKMANN. But, gentlemen—I really am ashamed to ask the question—but, what return do you —?

HOVSTAD. We should prefer to help you without any return whatever, believe me. But the *People's Messenger* is in rather a shaky condition; it doesn't go really well; and I should be very unwilling to suspend the paper now, when there is so much work to do here in the political way.

DR. STOCKMANN. Quite so; that would be a great trial to such a friend of the people as you are. [*Flares up.*] But I am an enemy of the people, remember! [*Walks about the room.*] Where have I put my stick? Where the devil is my stick?

HOVSTAD. What's that?

ASLAKSEN. Surely you never mean—?

DR. STOCKMANN [*standing still*]. And suppose I don't give you a single penny of all I get out of it? Money is not very easy to get out of us rich folk, please to remember!

HOVSTAD. And you please to remember that this affair of the shares can be represented in two ways!

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and you are just the man to do it. If I don't come to the rescue of the *People's Messenger*, you will certainly take an evil view of the affair; you will hunt me down, I can well imagine—pursue me—try to throttle me as a dog does a hare.

HOVSTAD. It is a natural law; every animal must fight for its own livelihood.

ASLAKSEN. And get its food when it can, you know.

DR. STOCKMANN [*walking about the room*]. Then you go and look for yours in the gutter; because I am going to show

you which is the strongest animal of us three! [*Finds an umbrella and brandishes it above his head.*] Ah, now—!

HOVSTAD. You are surely not going to use violence!

ASLASKEN. Take care what you are doing with that
5 umbrella.

DR. STOCKMANN. Out of the window with you, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD [*edging to the door*]. Are you quite mad!

DR. STOCKMANN. Out of the window, Mr. Aslaksen! Jump, I tell you! You will have to do it, sooner or later.

10 ASLAKSEN [*running round the writing-table*]. Moderation, Doctor—I am a delicate man—I can stand so little—[*calls out*] Help, help!

[*MRS. STOCKMANN, PETRA, and HORSTER come in from the sitting-room.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN. Good gracious, Thomas. What is happening?

15 DR. STOCKMANN [*brandishing the umbrella*]. Jump out, I tell you! Out into the gutter!

HOVSTAD. An assault on an unoffending man! I call you to witness, Captain Horster. [*Hurries out through the hall.*]

ASLAKSEN [*irresolutely*]. If only I knew the way about
20 here— [*Steals out through the sitting-room.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN [*holding her husband back*]. Control yourself, Thomas!

DR. STOCKMANN [*throwing down the umbrella*]. Upon my soul, they have escaped after all.

25 MRS. STOCKMANN. What did they want you to do?

DR. STOCKMANN. I will tell you later on; I have something else to think about now. [*Goes to the table and writes something on a calling-card.*] Look there, Katherine; what is written there?

30 MRS. STOCKMANN. Three big Noes; what does that mean?

DR. STOCKMANN. I will tell you that, too, later on.

[*Holds out the card to PETRA.*] There, Petra; tell sooty-face to run over to the "Badger's" with that, as quick as she can. Hurry up! [*PETRA takes the card and goes out to the hall.*]

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, I think I have had a visit from 5 every one of the devil's messengers today! But now I am going to sharpen my pen till they can feel its point; I shall dip it in venom and gall; I shall hurl my ink-pot at their heads!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, but we are going away, you 10 know, Thomas.

[*PETRA comes back.*]

DR. STOCKMANN. Well?

PETRA. She has gone with it.

DR. STOCKMANN. Good. —Going away, did you say? No, I'll be hanged if we are going away! We are going to stay 15 where we are, Katherine!

PETRA. Stay here?

MRS. STOCKMANN. Here, in the town?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, here. This is the field of battle—this is where the fight will be. This is where I shall triumph! 20 As soon as I have had my trousers sewn up I shall go out and look for another house. We must have a roof over our heads for the winter.

HORSTER. That you shall have in my house.

DR. STOCKMANN. Can I? 25

HORSTER. Yes, quite well. I have plenty of room, and I am almost never at home.

MRS. STOCKMANN. How good of you, Captain Horster!

PETRA. Thank you!

DR. STOCKMANN [*grasping his hand*]. Thank you, thank 30 you! That is one trouble over! Now I can set to work in earnest at once. There is an endless amount of things to

look through here, Katherine! Luckily I shall have all my time at my disposal; because I have been dismissed from the Baths, you know.

MRS. STOCKMANN [*with a sigh*]. Oh yes, I expected that.

5 DR. STOCKMANN. And they want to take my practice away from me, too. Let them! I have the poor people to fall back upon, anyway—those that don't pay anything; and, after all, they need me most. But, by Jove, they will have to listen to me; I shall preach to them in season
10 and out of season, as it says somewhere.

MRS. STOCKMANN. But, dear Thomas, I should have thought events had showed you what use it is to preach.

DR. STOCKMANN. You are really ridiculous, Katherine. Do you want me to let myself be beaten off the field by
15 public opinion and the compact majority and all that devilry? No, thank you! And what I want to do is so simple and clear and straightforward. I only want to drum into the heads of these curs the fact that the liberals are the most insidious enemies of freedom—that party programs strangle
20 every young and vigorous truth—that considerations of expediency turn morality and justice upside down—and that they will end by making life here unbearable. Don't you think, Captain Horster, that I ought to be able to make people understand that?

25 HORSTER. Very likely; I don't know much about such things myself.

DR. STOCKMANN. Well, look here—I will explain! It is the party leaders that must be exterminated. A party leader is like a wolf, you see—like a voracious wolf. He
30 requires a certain number of smaller victims to prey upon every year, if he is to live. Just look at Hovstad and Aslaksen! How many smaller victims have they not put an end to—or at any rate maimed and mangled until they are fit for nothing except to be householders or subscribers

to the *People's Messenger*! [*Sits down on the edge of the table.*] Come here, Katherine—look how beautifully the sun shines today! And this lovely spring air I am drinking in!

MRS. STOCKMANN. Yes, if only we could live on sunshine and spring air, Thomas. 5

DR. STOCKMANN. Oh, you will have to pinch and save a bit—then we shall get along. That gives me very little concern. What is much worse is, that I know of no one who is liberal-minded and high-minded enough to venture to take up my work after me. 10

PETRA. Don't think about that, father: you have plenty of time before you. —Hullo, here are the boys already!

[*EJLIF and MORTEN come in from the sitting-room.*]

MRS. STOCKMANN. Have you got a holiday?

MORTEN. No; but we were fighting with the other boys between lessons— 15

EJLIF. That isn't true; it was the other boys were fighting with us.

MORTEN. Well, and then Mr. Rörlund said we had better stay at home for a day or two.

DR. STOCKMANN [*snapping his fingers and getting up from the table*]. I have it! I have it, by Jove! You shall never set foot in the school again! 20

THE BOYS. No more school!

MRS. STOCKMANN. But, Thomas—

DR. STOCKMANN. Never, I say. I will educate you myself; that is to say, you shan't learn a blessed thing— 25

MORTEN. Hooray!

DR. STOCKMANN.—But I will make liberal-minded and high-minded men of you. You must help me with that, Petra. 30

PETRA. Yes, father, you may be sure I will.

DR. STOCKMANN. And my school shall be in the room where they insulted me and called me an enemy of the

people. But we are too few as we are; I must have at least twelve boys to begin with.

MRS. STOCKMANN. You will certainly never get them in this town.

5 DR. STOCKMANN. We shall. [*To the boys.*] Don't you know any street urchins—regular ragamuffins—?

MORTEN. Yes, father, I know lots!

DR. STOCKMANN. That's capital! Bring me some specimens of them. I am going to experiment with curs, just for
10 once; there may be some exceptional heads amongst them.

MORTEN. And what are we going to do, when you have made liberal-minded and high-minded men of us?

DR. STOCKMANN. Then you shall drive all the wolves out of the country, my boys!

[*EJLIF looks rather doubtful about it; MORTEN jumps about crying "Hurrah!"*]

15 MRS. STOCKMANN. Let us hope it won't be the wolves that will drive you out of the country, Thomas.

DR. STOCKMANN. Are you out of your mind, Katherine? Drive me out! Now—when I am the strongest man in the town!

20 MRS. STOCKMANN. The strongest—now?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes, and I will go so far as to say that now I am the strongest man in the whole world.

MORTEN. I say!

DR. STOCKMANN [*lowering his voice*]. Hush! You mustn't
25 say anything about it yet; but I have made a great discovery.

MRS. STOCKMANN. Another one?

DR. STOCKMANN. Yes. [*Gathers them round him, and says confidentially:*] It is this, let me tell you—that the strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone.

30 MRS. STOCKMANN [*smiling and shaking her head*]. Oh, Thomas, Thomas!

PETRA [*encouragingly, as she grasps her father's hands*]. Father!

↳ A Big Problem

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. What is the significance of the stage setting and of the conversation at the opening of the act?
2. How does Ibsen keep up our interest to the close of the play? Summarize in detail.
3. How do you explain Mr. Horster's unwavering adherence to Dr. Stockmann?
4. Is the closing of the play satisfactory to you?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did Dr. Stockmann fail?
2. DR. STOCKMANN (page 426): "The strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone."

THE PLAY AS A WHOLE

I. QUESTIONS

1. What problem does the play present? What is Ibsen's attitude?
2. Is there any suggestion in this play of the same idea that one finds in *Milestones*?
3. Which is more important in the play—action or characterization? Which of these two elements in a drama appeals more to you?
4. Could *An Enemy of the People* be converted into a one-act play? Why, or why not?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Ibsen's play as a representation of *Main Street* in Norway.
2. A comparison of this play with a Shakespearean tragedy you have read as to conversation, characters, situation, and method of representation.
3. Contrast as represented by the opening and closing of the play.
4. Your favorite character. The one you like the least.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READINGS

A FEW SELECTED BOOKS FOR THE STUDY
OF IBSEN

In order to understand the political, economic, and intellectual situation in the nineteenth century which created the changing order of which Ibsen was a product one should read selected chapters from modern histories of Europe for the period. Schapiro and Hayes (see bibliography under *Milestones*, page 212) are adequate for this purpose.

The Collected Works of Ibsen, edited by William Archer (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911-12). This is the standard edition of Ibsen's translated works. Excellent critical introductions. Edmund Gosse gives Archer credit for being really "the introducer of Ibsen to English readers."

The Correspondence of Henrik Ibsen (trans.) (Duffield and Company, 1908).

F. W. Chandler, *Aspects of Modern Drama* (The Macmillan Company, 1914). (See selected chapters, e.g., *The Drama of Ideas—Ibsen*.) Chandler lacks Lewisohn's (see below) trenchancy in critical analysis; but the book contains comprehensive and sound generalizations and excellent summaries of the plays.

Edmund Gosse, *Life of Ibsen* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908).

A human and readable biography. Gosse was the first person to introduce Ibsen to the English public.

Otto Heller, *Henrik Ibsen—Plays and Problems* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911). A comprehensive and popular study of Ibsen's dramatic work.

Ludwig Lewisohn, *Modern Drama* (B. W. Huebsch, 1915).

A sound, critical survey of the drama of realism. This book will assist one very much to understand the relation of Ibsen to the trend of realistic drama in the nineteenth century.

Anders Orbeck, *Early Plays of Henrik Ibsen* (Oxford University Press, 1921). Contains *Catiline*, *The Warrior's Barrow*, *Olaf Liljekrans*. These are Ibsen's earliest plays. Mr. Orbeck's translation marks their first appearance in English.

G. B. Shaw, *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (Brentano's, 1922). Very stimulating and thought-provoking. An analysis and interpretation of most of Ibsen's plays. Shaw, with Archer and Gosse, completes the trio responsible for introducing Ibsen to England.

One may gain a fairly comprehensive knowledge of Ibsen's dramatic work after his romantic period by reading *Brand*, *Peer Gynt*, *Love's Comedy*, *The League of Youth*, *Pillars of Society*, *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Rosmersholm*, *Hedda Gabler*, *The Wild Duck*, *Little Eyolf*, and *When We Dead Awaken*.

One may secure several of the translated plays in cheaper editions through E. P. Dutton (Everyman) and Walter H. Baker (Boston).

TWO PLAYS ESPECIALLY RECOMMENDED FOR ADDITIONAL READING BY STUDENTS

The League of Youth (1867). A young man who is hailed as leader of the people deserts them when he is invited to dinner by a member of the aristocracy.

Pillars of Society (1877). An exposure of the hypocrisy and low standards of a leading business man who is a pillar of society in his community.

THE ROMANCERS

(1894)

BY

EDMOND ROSTAND

The Romancers is here reprinted by permission of Walter H. Baker Company, Dramatic Books—Plays—Entertainments, Boston, Massachusetts. For permission to perform apply to the publishers. The translation from the French is by Mary Hendee.

INTRODUCTION TO *THE ROMANCERS*

I. EDMOND ROSTAND (1868-1918)

Edmond Rostand, the author of *The Romancers*, was born at Marseilles, France, in 1868. When he was a young man he went to Paris to study law; but he soon turned to literature as a life work. In 1912 he was elected to the French Academy, the greatest honor that can be accorded a Frenchman. He died December 2, 1918.

Rostand is best known through his *Cyrano de Bergerac*, the poet-lover who conceals his love for his sweetheart, assists his rival, performs unbelievable feats of valor, and despite discouragements and disappointments during his last years, maintains within himself a fine spirit of heroism to the end. Next to *Cyrano*, one recalls *Chantecler*, the poet and dreamer who, though disillusioned and disappointed, keeps a cheerful faith in himself. The same spirit characterizes the hero of another of his dramas, *L'Aiglon*, the son of Napoleon, who tries unsuccessfully to restore his father's lost empire. One author states that "Rostand wishes to be thought the poet of bravery in quest of an unattainable ideal." Aside from Sir James Barrie he is about the only representative of romanticism in modern drama.

II. ROMANTICISM IN THE MODERN DRAMA

Rostand challenges the attention of students of literature because he represents a brilliant survival, or revival, of a type of literature which makes us oblivious of our prosaic, everyday life and lures us into a world of the ordinarily impossible or improbable. This we call the literature of romanticism. If one may call realism the prose of life, he may call romanticism the poetry of life. Briefly, romanti-

cism in literature is an escape from the commonplaceness, the monotony, or the sordidness of ordinary life. It may represent escape into the past, into the future, into distant lands, into realms of the fancy or the imagination, or into the midst of everyday life as glorified by the magic of a poet who sees beauty everywhere. So the kingdom of romanticism may be inhabited by Ivanhoe, the gallant and heroic medieval knight, by Aladdin and his genii, by Jim Hawkins and his pirates, by d'Artagnan and his three swashbuckling, dare-devil musketeers, or by the modern Cinderella who creates a fairy world in her London attic and makes a London policeman her prince charming.

To the literal-minded person romanticism is merely the literature of the improbable or the impossible. But essentially the literature of romanticism may be as artistic and truthful in its presentation as the literature of realism. It all depends upon whether the author is an artist in the treatment of his material. Realism in the modern sense is concerned with one world and romanticism with another. Accept the illusion of a past recreated by Sir Walter Scott, of the magic land of *The Arabian Nights*, of Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, of the superhuman feats of Dumas's *Three Musketeers*, or of the dream world of a highly imaginative London waif as created by Sir James Barrie in *A Kiss for Cinderella*, and their conclusions are artistic and truthful presentations of those aspects of life. Romanticism represents the recurring escape of man from the material world and his perennial return to a world of adventure, of wonder, of beauty. It is a normal reaction to the poetry of life.

III. *The Romancers* AS ROMANTIC DRAMA

Les Romanesques (*The Romancers*) is Rostand's first drama. It won the prize offered by the French Academy in 1894 for the best play of the year. A recent historian of French literature calls the play "a gentle satire on romance by a romanticist." It is an artistic parody on the tragic

fates of some of the famous lovers in literature and is presented through the imaginary difficulties of two romantic young lovers who, despite their final disillusionment, continue to love one another. Compared with really great literary productions, *The Romancers* is a trifle "light as air" and of little consequence or significance; but it possesses an intrinsic beauty and an unforgettable charm. If possible, one should read it in the original.

The study of the play should be preceded by a rapid reading of *Romeo and Juliet* and, possibly of *Prunella*, also.

CHARACTERS

PERCINET (*a lover*)

STRAFOREL (*a bravo*)

BERGAMIN (*father of Percinet*)

PASQUINOT (*father of Sylvette*)

BLAISE (*a gardener*)

SYLVETTE (*daughter of Pasquinot*)

Swordsmen, Musicians, Negroes, Torchbearers, a Notary, four
Bourgeois, etc.

The scene is laid where you will, provided the costumes are pretty.

THE ROMANCERS*

ACT I

SCENE. *The stage is cut in two by an old wall, mossy and garlanded with luxuriant vines. To the right, a corner of BERGAMIN'S park; to the left, a corner of PASQUINOT'S. On each side, against the wall, a bench.*

[When the curtain rises, PERCINET is seated on the wall, with a book on his knees, from which he is reading to SYLVETTE. She stands on the bench in her father's park, her chin in her hands, her elbows against the wall, listening attentively.]

SYLVETTE. O Monsieur Percinet, how beautiful it is!

PERCINET. Isn't it? Hear Romeo's reply! [*He reads.*]

"It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale. Look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east.
Night's candles are burned out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
I must be gone. . . ."

5

SYLVETTE [*alert, with animation*]. Sh!

PERCINET [*listens a moment; then:*] No one! So, ma- 10
demoiselle, don't have the air of an affrighted birdling on a
branch, ready to spread wing at the slightest sound. Hear
the immortal lovers talking:

She. "Yon light is not daylight, I know it. I;
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torchbearer."

15

*Copyright, 1899, by Doubleday and McClure Company.

3. *It was the lark, etc.*, from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, III, v.

14. *Yon light, etc.*, from *Romeo and Juliet*, III, v.

He. "Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
 I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
 I'll say yon gray is not the morning's eye;
 'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;
 5 Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
 The vaulty heaven so high above our heads;
 I have more care to stay than will to go.
 Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so."

SYLVETTE. Oh, no! I won't have him talk of that; if he
 10 does, I shall cry.

PERCINET. Then we'll shut our book till tomorrow, and,
 since you wish it, let sweet Romeo live. [*He closes the book*
and looks about him.] What an adorable spot! It seems
 to be made for lulling oneself to the lines of the great
 15 William.

SYLVETTE. Yes, the lines are very beautiful, and the
 divine murmur in the branches accompanies them well, it is
 true. Yes, Monsieur Percinet, the lines are very beautiful,
 but what makes their beauty more touching to me is your
 20 reading them in your musical voice.

PERCINET. Base flatterer!

SYLVETTE [*sighing*]. Ah, poor lovers! How cruel their
 fate! How unkind people were to them! [*A sigh.*] It
 makes me think. . . .

25 PERCINET [*eagerly*]. Of what?

SYLVETTE. Nothing!

PERCINET. Of something that sends you suddenly very
 rosy!

SYLVETTE [*as before*]. Nothing!

30 PERCINET [*shaking his finger at her*]. Oh! the dissembler—
 with the too transparent eyes! . . . I see of what you are
 thinking! [*Lowers his voice.*] Of our parents.

SYLVETTE. Perhaps . . .

PERCINET. Of your father, of mine, and the hatred that
 35 divides them!

SYLVETTE. Ah, yes! it is that which pains me, that which often makes me weep in secret. Last month, when I came home from the convent, my father pointed toward your father's park, and said: "My dear child, you see here the lair of my mortal enemy, Bergamin. Promise to avoid that 5 villain and his son, and to be their enemy forever, or I'll disown you; for their race has always execrated yours." I made the promise; you see, monsieur, how I keep it.

PERCINET. And did not I, too, promise my father to hate you always, Sylvette? . . . and I love you! 10

SYLVETTE. Holy Virgin!

PERCINET. And I love thee, child!

SYLVETTE. 'Tis a sin!

PERCINET. A great sin! But what could be expected? The more one is forbidden to love a person, the more desire 15 he has to do it. . . . Kiss me, Sylvette!

SYLVETTE. Oh, never! [*She jumps off the bench and retreats.*]

PERCINET. Yet you love me.

SYLVETTE. What does he say? 20

PERCINET. Dear child, I say that against which your heart still protests, but which to doubt longer were a delusion. I say . . . what you yourself but just now said, yes, you yourself, Sylvette, in comparing the lovers of Verona to these two children here. 25

SYLVETTE. I didn't compare. . . .

PERCINET. Yes, dear; your father and my father, to Juliet's father and Romeo's. So we are Romeo and Juliet, and so we love each other madly; and in spite of their bitter hate, I brave at once Pasquinet-Capulet, Bergamin- 30 Montague!

SYLVETTE [*coming a little nearer the wall*]. Then we love

30. *Pasquinet-Capulet, Bergamin-Montague.* Percinet imagines himself representing the Montague side of the Shakespearean feud and Sylvette, the Capulet side.

each other? But how, Monsieur Percinet, has it come about so quickly?

PERCINET. Love is born—one knows not how nor why—when it should be born. I often saw you passing by my
5 window.

SYLVETTE. And I you.

PERCINET. And our eyes communed by stealth.

SYLVETTE. One day, there, by the wall, I was gathering nuts. By chance—

10 PERCINET. By chance, I was reading Shakespeare, there. And to unite our two hearts, see how everything conspired!

SYLVETTE. The wind caught up, psst! my ribbon, and blew it over to you.

PERCINET. To return it, I climbed on the bench.

15 SYLVETTE [*climbing*]. And I climbed on the bench.

PERCINET. And every day since, little one, I have waited for you, and every day my heart beats faster, till there goes up, oh, blessed signal! there behind the wall, your sweet, aëry laugh, which has not died away, when your head
20 emerges from the trembling tangle of the wild virgin vine!

SYLVETTE. Since we love each other, we must be engaged.

PERCINET. 'Tis precisely what I was thinking.

SYLVETTE [*solemnly*]. Last of the Bergamins, to you the last of the Pasquinots allies herself!

25 PERCINET. Noble folly!

SYLVETTE. Future ages will talk of us.

PERCINET. Too tender children of too cruel fathers!

SYLVETTE. Yet who knows, my friend, perhaps the hour is sounding, when Heaven wills that through us their hatred
30 shall be dissolved.

PERCINET. I doubt it.

SYLVETTE. But I—I have faith in fortune, and I see already five or six possible solutions.

PERCINET. Really? And what?

SYLVETTE. Well, suppose—in more than one old romance I've read the like—suppose the Reigning Prince comes to spend the day. I run to entreat him, tell him of our love, of the old feud between our fathers.—A king surely married Rodrigue and Chimène.—The Prince summons my father 5 and Monsieur Bergamin, and reconciles them.

PERCINET. And gives me your hand.

SYLVETTE. Or again, it might turn out as in *Peau d'Âne*. You are wasting away. A stupid doctor condemns you to die.

PERCINET. My father, distracted, cries, "What do you 10 want?"

SYLVETTE. You say, "I want Sylvette!"

PERCINET. And his stubborn pride is constrained to bend.

SYLVETTE. Or again, another adventure. An old duke, 15 having seen somewhere a painting of me, loves me, and sends a splendid equerry in his name, who offers to make me a duchess.

PERCINET. Then, you say, "No!"

SYLVETTE. He is angry. One beautiful night, in some 20 somber path of the park, where I have gone to dream of you, I am seized! I cry out!

PERCINET. And without delay, I arrive. I draw my dagger, fight like a lion, cut down—

SYLVETTE. Three or four men. My father rushes up, 25 takes you in his arms. You tell your name, he softens, gives me to my rescuer, and your father, proud of your valor, consents.

7. *Rodrigue and Chimène*, the hero and heroine of *Le Cid* (1636), a French drama by Corneille. Despite a quarrel between the fathers, as a result of which Rodrigue kills Chimène's father Don Gomez, the lovers, who have always kept their affection for one another, are married at the command of the king. The original story of *Le Cid* is the great epic of Spain.

8. *Peau d'Âne*, a fable by the French writer La Fontaine (1621-1695). It tells of the ass who clothed himself in the skin of a lion and was able to spread terror everywhere until someone saw the point of his ears sticking out. Then he was exposed and put to shame. So Sylvette here means that Percinet's plan might turn out badly.

PERCINET. And we live happy together ever after!

SYLVETTE. There's nothing impossible about it, it seems to me.

PERCINET [*hearing a noise*]. Someone is coming!

5 SYLVETTE [*losing her head*]. Kiss me!

PERCINET [*kissing her*]. And tonight at the hour of prayers, you will come?—Say it!

SYLVETTE. No!

PERCINET. Yes!

10 SYLVETTE [*disappearing behind the wall*]. Your father!

[PERCINET *jumps briskly down*.]

[SYLVETTE *is behind the wall, and consequently invisible to*
BERGAMIN, *who enters*.]

BERGAMIN. I find you alone again, dreaming in this corner of the park?

PERCINET. Father, I adore this corner of the park. I love to sit on this bench sheltered by the overhanging vines
15 of the wall. Do you see how graceful the vine is? Notice these festoons with their shapely arabesques. . . . One breathes here such a pure air!

BERGAMIN. In front of this wall?

PERCINET. I adore the wall!

20 BERGAMIN. I don't see what there is adorable about it.

SYLVETTE [*aside*]. He cannot see!

PERCINET. But it is an admirable old wall, crested with green, festooned, here with ivy, there with scarlet creeper,
25 again with the snail-flower's mauve velvet panicles, and here with honeysuckle, and there with woodbine; this old crumbling centenary of a wall, whose cracks let out into the sunshine strange, rough, mane-like growths, stellated with charming little flowers!—this wall on which the moss is of

a thickness to make for the humble bench sunk in its side, a back fit for a king's throne!

BERGAMIN. Ta, ta, youngster! Would you have me believe you come here for the sake of the wall's beautiful eyes?

PERCINET. Yes, the wall's beautiful eyes! [*Turns toward the wall.*] Very beautiful eyes they are! . . . Fresh, azure smiles, sweet blue astonishments, clear, deep flower eyes, you touch our hearts! If ever tears impearl your chalices, we'll distill them with a kiss!

BERGAMIN. But the wall hasn't eyes!

PERCINET. It has morning-glories! [*He quickly breaks off a flower and presents it gracefully to BERGAMIN.*]

SYLVETTE. Is he not *spirituel*!

BERGAMIN. He's a fool!—But I know what makes him lose his head. [*Movement of consternation on the part of SYLVETTE and PERCINET.*] You come here to read in secret. [*Takes the book sticking out of PERCINET's pocket, and looks at the back.*] Plays! [*Opens it and lets it fall with horror.*] In verse! Poetry! No wonder your head is topsy-turvy! No wonder you wander off to dream, and talk of woodbine, and see blue eyes in the wall! A wall has no need to be pretty, but strong! I'll have all those green things taken off; they might hide some breach; and to better guard us from an insolent neighbor, I'll have this side remortared—build a fine white wall, very white, very smooth, very trim. In place of—woodbine, I'll have grooves cut in the plaster, and dress out the wall with bits of broken bottles, sharp as steel, set in serried ranks. . . .

PERCINET. Mercy!

BERGAMIN. No mercy! I'll have it like that! All along, all along, all along the top!

SYLVETTE and PERCINET [*in consternation*]. Oh!

BERGAMIN [*seating himself on the bench*]. Come, let's talk!

[*He gets up and walks away from the wall.*] Hm! walls, if they haven't eyes, have ears. [*He starts to mount the bench. Affright of PERCINET. At the movement, SYLVETTE crouches against the wall. But BERGAMIN gives up, with a grimace, and motions for his son to mount instead.*] See if some inquisitive—

PERCINET [*climbing lithely on the bench and hanging over the wall; low, to SYLVETTE, who springs up again.*] Until tonight!

10 SYLVETTE [*giving him her hand, which he kisses; very low.*] I will come before the hour strikes.

PERCINET [*the same*]. I shall be there.

SYLVETTE [*the same*]. I adore you!

BERGAMIN [*to PERCINET*]. Well?

15 PERCINET [*springing to the ground; aloud*]. No one!

BERGAMIN [*reassured, sits down again*]. Then let's talk. My son, I wish you to marry.

SYLVETTE. Ah!

BERGAMIN. What's that?

20 PERCINET. Nothing.

BERGAMIN. I heard a feeble cry.

PERCINET [*looking up*]. Some wounded bird—

SYLVETTE. Alas!

PERCINET. Among the branches.

25 BERGAMIN. Well, then, my son, after mature reflection, I've made a choice for you.

PERCINET [*goes up the stage whistling*]. Tee! tee!

BERGAMIN [*after an instant of suffocation*]. I am determined; I shall force you, sir!

30 PERCINET [*coming back*]. Tee! tee! tee! tee!

BERGAMIN. Will you stop whistling, wretched blackbird! . . . A woman still young, and very rich. A pearl!

PERCINET. And if I don't want your pearl!

BERGAMIN. Wait! I'll show you, miscreant!

PERCINET [*lowering his father's raised cane*]. Spring has filled the hedges with the sound of wings, and the wood streams see little birds in couples lighting on their banks to caress each other.

BERGAMIN. Shameless fellow!

5

PERCINET [*same action*]. All things laugh and welcome new-born April. The butterflies—

BERGAMIN. Ruffian!

PERCINET [*same action*]. Flock across the fields to wed the flower they love. Love itself—

10

BERGAMIN. Outlaw!

PERCINET [*same action*]. Puts all hearts in flower; and you would see me make a marriage of convenience!

BERGAMIN. Yes, certainly, monster!

PERCINET. Well then, no, no, my father. I swear . . . 15
by this wall—which hears me, I hope—to marry so romantically that there never will be seen in any romance anything more madly romantic! [*He takes to flight.*]

BERGAMIN [*running after him*]. Oh, I'll catch you!

SYLVETTE [*alone*]. Really, I almost understand papa's 20
hatred of that wretch.

PASQUINOT [*entering*]. Well, what might you be doing here, mademoiselle?

SYLVETTE. Nothing. I'm walking.

PASQUINOT. Here? alone? But, unhappy girl! you're 25
not afraid then?

SYLVETTE. I'm not timid, Papa.

PASQUINOT. Alone, near this wall! But I forbid you to approach it! Imprudent child, look well at that park! You behold there the retreat of my mortal enemy!

30

SYLVETTE. I know, Father.

PASQUINOT. And you expose yourself to insulting words, to— Does anyone know of what these people are capable? If that blackguard or his son knew that my daughter comes

alone to dream under these elms—oh, the very thought of it makes me shudder! But I'm going to sheathe the wall, barb it, bristle it with iron, so that anyone trying to scale it shall be gored, shall be impaled, and that spikes shall
5 pierce his flesh if he so much as approach it.

SYLVETTE [*aside*]. He won't do it; it would cost too much. Papa is a little close.

PASQUINOT. Do go in, quick! [*She goes. He follows her with wrathful eyes.*]

10 BERGAMIN [*speaking into the wing*]. This note to Monsieur Straforel, immediately.

PASQUINOT [*runs briskly to the wall and climbs up*]. Bergamin!

BERGAMIN [*does the same*]. Pasquinot! [*They embrace.*]

15 PASQUINOT. How goes it?

BERGAMIN. Pretty well.

PASQUINOT. How's your gout?

BERGAMIN. Better. And your influenza?

PASQUINOT. The animal grips me always.

20 BERGAMIN. Well, sir, the marriage is made!

PASQUINOT. Eh?

BERGAMIN. I hid in the shrubbery and heard everything. They adore each other.

PASQUINOT. Hurray!

25 BERGAMIN. Let's hasten affairs. [*He rubs his hands.*]
Ha! ha! Both widowers and both fathers, I of a son whom his mother, a little too romantic, named Percinet—

PASQUINOT. Yes, it is a grotesque name.

BERGAMIN. You of a dreamy girl, Sylvette, of the azure
30 soul. What was our aim, the only one we had?

PASQUINOT. To get rid of this wall.

BERGAMIN. To live together—

PASQUINOT. And merge our two estates in one.

BERGAMIN. Scheme of old friends—

35 PASQUINOT. And property-holders.

BERGAMIN. For success, what was necessary?

PASQUINOT. To marry our children.

BERGAMIN. To marry them, yes; but should we be triumphant, if they had suspected it? Marriage without obstacles isn't tempting to two such poetic young simpletons. 5 Profiting from the fact that they had grown up far from here, we hid our project of a union, and reflecting that to hinder them from seeing each other was the surest means of bringing them together, that 'twould please them to think they were stealing the sweets, I invented this admirable 10 hatred. You doubted the success of such an unheard-of plan. Well, sir, we've nothing more to do but say yes!

PASQUINOT. Good? But how—how be adroit enough to consent without rousing their suspicions? . . . I who called you trickster, dotard?— 15

BERGAMIN. Trickster sufficed; never go beyond justice.

PASQUINOT. What pretext . . . ?

BERGAMIN. Listen! Your daughter herself has just suggested the final stroke, and while she was talking to 20 Percinet I sketched my plot. They have a rendezvous here tonight. Percinet will arrive first. The moment Sylvette appears, masked men, who have been in hiding, seize her. She cries out. Then my young buck rushes on the ravishers, and attacks with his sword. They pretend to 25 flee. You arrive. I appear. Your daughter and her honor are safe. Your joy overflows. You let fall a few tears, bless the heroic rescuer, I relent—tableau!

PASQUINOT. Ah, that's genius! . . . I say! . . . Genius!

BERGAMIN [*modest*]. Eh? . . . Yes . . . something like 30 it—Hush! Notice that man coming! It's Straforel, the swordsman. I wrote to him just now about my plan. He's going to put the play on the boards. [*STRAFOREL, in a gorgeous costume, appears at the back of the stage, and comes majestically forward.*]

BERGAMIN [*getting down from the wall and bowing*]. Hm! Let me first make you acquainted with my friend Pasquinot.

STRAFOREL [*bowing*]. Monsieur! [*Upon raising his head*
5 *he is surprised not to see PASQUINOT.*]

BERGAMIN [*pointing him out astride the wall*]. There, on
the wall.

STRAFOREL [*aside*]. Astonishing exercise for a man of his years!

10 BERGAMIN. My plan appears to you . . . ?

STRAFOREL. Simple.

BERGAMIN. Ah, yes, you know how to comprehend, to act quickly—

STRAFOREL. And to be silent.

15 BERGAMIN. Pretense of abduction, isn't it, and a feigned fight?

STRAFOREL. That is all clear.

BERGAMIN. You must have adroit swordsmen, who won't wound my boy. I'm very fond of him. He's my only child.

20 STRAFOREL. I shall conduct the affair myself.

BERGAMIN. Ah, good! Then I have no fears.

PASQUINOT [*low, to BERGAMIN*]. Say, ask him how much it's going to cost.

BERGAMIN [*to STRAFOREL*]. What do you charge for an
25 abduction, master swordsman?

STRAFOREL. That depends, monsieur, upon the kind. We make abductions at almost all prices. But in the present case, if I understand aright, the cost doesn't count. I should take one—of the first class, monsieur.

30 BERGAMIN [*dazed*]. Ah, you have several classes!

STRAFOREL. Certainly! Know, sir, that we have the abduction with two men in black, very commonplace, in a cab—that kind is scarcely at all in demand; a splendid abduction in a court carriage, with powdered and
35 frizzled lackeys—the perukes come extra—with mutes,

eunuchs, negroes, gendarmes, brigands, musketeers at will; abduction by coach, with two, three, four, five horses—the number increased *ad libitum*; a quiet abduction in a berlin—a little somber; the humorous abduction, in a bag; the romantic, by boat—but we must have a lake! The Venetian, in a gondola—which needs a lagoon! We have the abduction with or without moonlight—moonlight abductions, being more sought after, are dearer! We have the sinister abduction, with lightning, signals, tumult, clash of weapons, wide-brimmed hats, gray mantles! There's the brutal abduction, the courteous; the abduction with torches—very pretty! An abduction with masks, we call classic; the gallant abduction, done to music; the abduction in a sedan chair—the gayest of all, monsieur, the newest and the most distinguished!

BERGAMIN [*scratching his head; to PASQUINOT*]. Let's see, what do you think?

PASQUINOT. Hm! what do you?

BERGAMIN. I think we ought to strike hard. So much the worse if it costs. Put some imagination into it. Have a little of everything. Make the abduction—

STRAFOREL. Variegated? That is possible.

BERGAMIN. Let's give our young romancers enough to last them; sedan, mantles, torches, music, masks!

STRAFOREL [*writing in a notebook*]. To group these various elements, we'll have a first class, with supplements.

BERGAMIN. Yes, have it so.

STRAFOREL. I shall be back very soon. But it is necessary that Monsieur Pasquinot leave his gate ajar.

BERGAMIN. We will leave it ajar.

STRAFOREL [*bowing*]. Gentlemen, I wish you good evening. [*As he leaves the stage.*] First class with supplements. [BERGAMIN *remounts the wall, and sits facing PASQUINOT.*]

PASQUINOT. The worthy man retires in all his glory, without setting the price.

BERGAMIN. Never mind. The thing is done. The wall's to be taken down. We shall have one home.

5 PASQUINOT. And in winter, oh, joy! but one rent to pay in the city.

BERGAMIN. We'll do charming things in the park.

PASQUINOT. We'll trim the yew trees.

BERGAMIN. We'll make gravel walks.

10 PASQUINOT. We'll have our monograms interlaced, in flowers, in the middle of each bed.

BERGAMIN. As these stretches of lawn are a little severe—

PASQUINOT. We'll relieve them a bit by ornaments.

BERGAMIN. We'll have a new pond, filled with fish.

15 PASQUINOT. We'll have some rocks, a fountain—Hey, old fellow! How does it strike you?

BERGAMIN. That all our vows are accomplished.

PASQUINOT. We'll grow old together.

BERGAMIN. Your daughter is provided for.

20 PASQUINOT. Your son also.

BERGAMIN. My good Pasquinot!

PASQUINOT. My good Bergamin! [*They fall into each other's arms.*]

[*SYLVETTE and PERCINET come in quickly on the two sides.*]

SYLVETTE [*seeing her father in BERGAMIN's arms*]. Oh!

25 BERGAMIN [*catching sight of SYLVETTE; to PASQUINOT*]. Your daughter!

PERCINET [*sees his father embracing PASQUINOT*]. Ah!

PASQUINOT [*perceiving PERCINET, to BERGAMIN*]. Your son!

30 BERGAMIN [*low, to PASQUINOT*]. Fight! [*They transform the embrace into a hand-to-hand scuffle. Aloud.*] Blackguard!

PASQUINOT. Ruffian!

SYLVETTE [*pulling her father by the coat tails*]. Papa!

PERCINET [*same action, to BERGAMIN*]. Papa!

BERGAMIN. Let us alone, brats!

PASQUINOT. He insulted me!

BERGAMIN. He struck me!

5

PASQUINOT. Coward!

SYLVETTE. Papa!!

BERGAMIN. Villain!

PERCINET. Papa!!

PASQUINOT. Brigand!

10

SYLVETTE. Papa!!! [*They succeed in separating them.*]

PERCINET [*hurrying his father away*]. Let's go into the house. It's late.

BERGAMIN [*trying to return*]. I'm in a towering passion!

[PERCINET *leads him off.*]

PASQUINOT [*same action with SYLVETTE*]. I'm raging!

15

SYLVETTE [*drawing him away*]. It's getting cold. Think of your rheumatism.

[*The daylight dies out. The stage is empty a little time, then STRAFOREL, his swordsmen, musicians, etc., enter PASQUINOT'S park.*]

STRAFOREL. One star gleams already in the sky. The day's in flight. [*He arranges his men.*] You there!—you there!—you there! Yes, the hour of prayers must be near. 20 When the bell tolls, she comes, all in her white. Then I will whistle. [*He looks at the sky.*] The moon? 'Tis perfect! We shall not miss a single effect. [*Observing the extravagant mantles of the swordsmen.*] The cloaks are excellent. Let the swords raise them a little higher. Bear down on the 25 hilts! [*The sedan is brought in.*] Put the chair here, in the shade. [*Perceives that the porters are black.*] Ah! negroes! Not bad! not bad! [*Speaking into the wing.*] The torches, remember, wait for the signal. [*A vague rose light fills the*

back of the stage, reflected from the torches, which are held behind the trees. The musicians come in.] The musicians? There! Background of rosy light! [He arranges them.] Grace, you know, and tenderness! Vary your poses. Let
 5 the mandolin stand! Sit down, viola! as in Watteau's Rural Concert. [Severely, to a swordsman.] First masked man there, what do I see? You're lounging? So! Strike an attitude! Good! Instruments *con sordini*! Will you tune? . . . Oh! very good! Sol, mi, si! [He masks.]

10 PERCINET [enters slowly. As he speaks the following lines, the night grows darker and the stars come out.] My father is calmed. . . . I could fly here at last. . . . The day declines. . . . The floating fragrance of the elders is intoxicating. . . . Deepening twilight blots out the flowers.

15 STRAFOREL [low to the violins]. Music! [The musicians play softly to the end of the act.]

PERCINET. I feel myself tremble like a reed. What is it? —She is coming!

STRAFOREL [to the musicians]. *Amoroso*!

20 PERCINET. First rendezvous at night!—I faint! The breeze sounds like a silken robe. One sees the flowers no longer, but their fragrance pierces my soul and fills my eyes with tears! . . . Thou grand old tree, thy top tipped by a star. . . . But whence this music? . . . The night has come.

25 Yes—

Sweet night has come. In heaven's azure deep,
 Here, there, one after one, the stars catch fire.
 As swells the pond's deep, croaking symphony,
 They, too, in rich crescendo are increasing

30 All round, all round the pale moon's slender crescent.
 O splendid spheres of sapphire and of diamond,
 O stars! I long have been your ardent lover,

5. Watteau's *Rural Concert*, a painting by the French artist Watteau (1684-1721).

8. *con sordini*, i.e., softly.

19. *Amoroso*, in a soft and tender style.

Made vows to you at night—inwrapt, exalted!
 But now my poesy has changed its current;
 For, holding naïf discourse, her sweet forehead
 Adorned with little close-cut locks, Sylvette's here!
 Dear stars of heaven, ye milliards there on high, 5
 Dear old familiar stars, your light is fair;
 But when she comes, in veils diaphanous,
 Here in the garden's mystic blue, your fires,
 Struck with disdain for their own proper light,
 Seeing her eyes, will all burn low, poor stars! 10

SYLVETTE [*appears at the tolling of the bell*]. The bell sounds for prayers. He must be waiting for me. [*A whistle is blown. STRAFOREL rises before her. Torches appear. Masked men pick her up and put her quickly in the sedan.*] Help! 15

PERCINET. Just Heaven!

SYLVETTE. Percinet! they're carrying me off!

PERCINET. I come! [*He jumps the wall, draws his sword, and crosses with several masks.*] There!—There!—There!

STRAFOREL [*to the musicians*]. Tremolo! [*The violins 20 raise a dramatic tremolo. The swordsmen escape. STRAFOREL, in a theatrical tone.*] By Bacchus! the child is a devil! [*Duel between STRAFOREL and PERCINET. Suddenly STRAFOREL carries his hand to his heart.*] The blow . . . is mortal! [*He falls.*] 25

PERCINET [*running to SYLVETTE*]. Sylvette! [*Tableau. She is in the sedan, he on his knees.*]

SYLVETTE. My deliverer!

PASQUINOT [*arriving*]. The son of Bergamin! Your deliverer! . . . Your deliverer? . . . I'll give him your hand! 30

SYLVETTE and PERCINET. Heaven! [*BERGAMIN has come in on his side, followed by valets with torches.*]

PASQUINOT [*to BERGAMIN, who appears on the wall*]. Bergamin, your son is a hero! Your pardon, and let us make them happy! 35

BERGAMIN [*solemnly*]. My hatred abandons me!

PERCINET. Sylvette, we dream! Sylvette, let us speak low, lest the sound of our voices wake us!

BERGAMIN. Hatreds always end in marriages. The
5 peace is made! [*Pointing to the wall.*] There are no more Pyrenees!

PERCINET. Who could have believed my father would change like that!

SYLVETTE [*simply*]. I told you it would all arrange itself.
[*While they go up the stage with PASQUINOT, STRAFOREL rises and holds out a paper to BERGAMIN.*]

10 BERGAMIN [*low*]. Eh? What? This paper, and your signature? . . . What is it, if you please?

STRAFOREL [*bowing*]. Monsieur, it's the bill! [*He falls again.*]

CURTAIN

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. What is the situation as presented in Act I?
2. What do the staging and the opening conversation of the lovers suggest as to the type of play?
3. Why do the fathers really wish their children to marry? Why do they appear to oppose the marriage?
4. What difference would it make in the general spirit of the last scene if the act closed with Sylvette's words: "I told you it would all arrange itself"?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The conversation—natural or unnatural? Why?
2. Element of humor in this act.

6. *Pyrenees*, the chain of mountains separating France and Spain. They symbolize for Bergamin almost insuperable obstacles, now removed.

ACT II

SCENE. *The same. The wall has disappeared. The benches which were against it have been carried right and left. Slight changes: great flower beds, trellised arbors, showy statuary, conservatory. To the right a garden-table and chairs.*

[*At the rising of the curtain PASQUINOT is seated on the bench at the left, reading his journal. BLAISE, at the back, is raking.*]

BLAISE [*raking*]. So the notary comes this evening, Monsieur Pasquinot? Eh! it's a good month the wall has been down and you all living together.—It was time!—Our pretty lovers ought to be content.

PASQUINOT [*raising his head and looking about*]. It goes 5 well without the wall, eh, Blaise?

BLAISE. It's superb!

PASQUINOT. Yes, my park has gained a hundred per cent. [*He bends over and feels a tuft of grass.*] But this grass is wet! —It's been watered, then, this morning? [*Angry.*] It 10 should be watered only at night, old imbecile!

BLAISE [*placidly*]. 'Twas Monsieur Bergamin ordered it.

PASQUINOT. Aha? . . . The good Bergamin . . . he won't let go his ideas! He advocates sprinkling without end, rather than sparingly and discreetly, at just the right moment. 15 Well! . . . [*To BLAISE.*] Bring the plants out of the greenhouse. [*BLAISE makes a row of the plants, in the rear; PASQUINOT reads, BERGAMIN appears up the stage.*]

BERGAMIN [*watering the shrubbery from an enormous watering-pot*]. Umph! they get only the moisture absolutely 20 necessary. What does them good is this overplus. [*To a tree.*] Hola, old fellow! dying of thirst? Wait a minute,

here's water! Wait, here it is! I'm a man that loves trees. [*Puts down the watering-pot and looks about him with satisfaction.*] Yes, my park has gained. Very pretty these statues, very—[*Sees PASQUINOT.*] Good morning! [*No response.*] Good morning!! [*No response.*] Good morning!!! [*PASQUINOT looks up.*] Well, I'm waiting.

PASQUINOT. Oh, my friend, but we see each other all the time.

BERGAMIN. Eh? . . . Oh, well! [*Sees BLAISE arranging the plants.*] Will you take in those plants! [*The bewildered BLAISE hastens back with them, one after another.*] PASQUINOT lifts his eyes to heaven, shrugs his shoulders, and reads. BERGAMIN comes and goes in desultory fashion, and ends by sitting down beside PASQUINOT. Silence. Then suddenly and dis-
mally.] Every day, at this hour, I used to slip out of my house—

PASQUINOT [*musingly, dropping his paper*]. And I out of mine, stealthily, softly—it was very amusing!

BERGAMIN. The secrecy!

20 PASQUINOT. The danger!

BERGAMIN. Percinet or Sylvette to evade each time we came to gossip!

PASQUINOT. We risked breaking a rib or a thigh every time we climbed the wall.

25 BERGAMIN. Our daily conversations cost us the cunning of an Indian!

PASQUINOT. We had to slip under the hedges!—'Twas very amusing!

BERGAMIN. Sometimes I crept along the grass, and at night my breeches were all green at the knees.

PASQUINOT. Each must always be swearing death to the other.

BERGAMIN. Or blackening his character!

PASQUINOT. 'Twas very diverting. [*Yawns.*] Bergamin.

BERGAMIN [*yawning, too*]. Pasquinot?

PASQUINOT. We miss that now.

BERGAMIN. No! come, come! [*After reflection.*] We do though. Oh, it's ridiculous! Can this be the revenge of 5 the Romantic? [*Silence. He looks at PASQUINOT, who is reading again.*] His vest always lacks a button somewhere! It's irritating! [*He gets up, moves away, comes and goes.*]

PASQUINOT [*watching him over his paper, aside*]. He looks like a huge maybug swirling about, with his coat tails for 10 wingsheaths. [*When BERGAMIN passes in front of him he pretends to read.*]

BERGAMIN [*observing him, aside*]. He looks cross-eyed when he reads, like a jester eyeing his cap-peak. [*Goes up the stage whistling.*] 15

PASQUINOT [*aside, nervous*]. He whistles! It's a trick of his! [*Aloud.*] Pray don't whistle all the time, like an adder!

BERGAMIN [*smiling*]. We distinguish the mote in the eyes of others, and are unconscious of the beam in our own. You have pet habits enough! 20

PASQUINOT. I?

BERGAMIN. You rock yourself. You're all the time wheezing, king of the snufflers! Your nose is always black with some sneeze-provoking stuff. You tell the same story six—twenty times a day! 25

PASQUINOT [*who sits with his legs crossed, balancing his foot*]. But—

BERGAMIN. You can't sit an instant without swinging your foot like a great censer. At table you roll your bread crumbs up in little balls. A man of crotchets, my dear? I 30 should say so!

PASQUINOT. Yes, now you're getting tired of vegetating, you have time to inventory me, to enumerate my faults, to

draw up a list of them. But this life in common is a great oculist. It has opened my eyes, too. I see you avaricious, crafty, egotistic, and each of your little faults grows big, as the diverting little fly, under the lens, becomes a frightful

5 monster.

BERGAMIN. What I suspected, I'm sure of now.

PASQUINOT. What's that?

BERGAMIN. The wall flattered you.

PASQUINOT. You fall far short without the wall.

10 BERGAMIN. My ardent longing to see you every day is cooling.

PASQUINOT [*breaking forth*]. Sir! there's been no living for a month!

BERGAMIN [*very dignified*]. Very well, sir, very well! But
15 what we did was not for ourselves, you know.

PASQUINOT. Indeed!

BERGAMIN. It was for our children.

PASQUINOT [*with conviction*]. Yes, certainly, for our children! Then let us suffer in silence, and bear our loss
20 of liberty with no repining.

BERGAMIN. To sacrifice themselves is the lot of parents.

[SYLVETTE and PERCINET appear at the left, up the stage, among the trees, and slowly cross, with arms about each other's waists, and with exalted gestures.]

PASQUINOT. Sh! Here are the lovers!

BERGAMIN. Look at those postures! . . . They walk like the Olympians!

25 PASQUINOT. Since all their dreams were realized in that adventure, they feel aureoles resting on their hair.

BERGAMIN. Every day, at this hour, pensive, with the

24. *Olympians*, the twelve greater gods and goddesses of Greece, whose home was on Mount Olympus.

stately tread of love pilgrims in the gallant fêtes of old, they come to pay their vows on the site of the combat. [SYLVETTE and PERCINET, who have disappeared at the right, reappear there, in a nearer wing, and descend the stage.] Here are our pilgrims!

5

PASQUINOT. If they rhapsodize on their usual theme, it will be worth hearing! [BERGAMIN and PASQUINOT hide behind a clump of trees as SYLVETTE and PERCINET come down.]

PERCINET. I love thee.

10

SYLVETTE. I love you. [They stop.] Here we are, at the famous spot!

PERCINET. Yes, 'tis here the thing happened. 'Tis here the brute fell lifeless, transfixed by my sword.

SYLVETTE. Here I was Andromeda.

15

PERCINET. And here was I Perseus.

SYLVETTE. How many were there against you!

PERCINET. Ten.

SYLVETTE. Oh, twenty! twenty at least, without counting that huge last one who turned on you, and whose stubborn humor you punished.

20

PERCINET. Yes, you are right, there were at least thirty.

SYLVETTE. Oh! tell me once again, my victor, how, sword in hand, flame in your eyes, you struck them in the darkness!

25

PERCINET. I know not if it were in sixte or in quarte, but they fell like paper Capuchins.

SYLVETTE. Were your hair less blond, my friend, I should have thought I saw the Cid.

15-16. *Andromeda* . . . *Perseus*, classical lovers. Perseus with his magic sandals and his helmet of invisibility was able to kill the dragon just as it was about to destroy the beautiful Andromeda. For the complete story see Guerber, *Myths of Greece and Rome*, pages 246-249.

26. *in sixte* or *in quarte*, terms used to indicate positions in fencing.

27. *Capuchins*. Capuchins were an order of monks. So, Percinet says that his opponents fell like paper effigies of monks.

29. *the Cid*. See the footnote on page 441, line 5.

PERCINET. Yes, we resemble each other.

SYLVETTE. Our romance lacks only to be immortalized in verse.

PERCINET. Sylvette, it shall be!

5 SYLVETTE. I love you!

PERCINET. I love thee!

SYLVETTE. I have lived a dream! I had so often vowed to myself to marry a hero, whom I should meet in some extraordinary fashion, and not the humdrum little husband of
10 everyday life.

PERCINET. Indeed!

SYLVETTE. No, no! not such a one as they offer young girls—the milk-and-water gentlemen whom his sister or his worthy confessor is trying to betroth!

15 PERCINET. Above all things, I trust, you would not have married the inevitable son of a friend of your father's.

SYLVETTE [*laughing*]. Ah, no! . . . Have you noticed that for several days my father and yours are, well . . . in a mood—

20 PERCINET. Yes, beastly!

BERGAMIN [*behind the shrubbery*]. Hum!

PERCINET. And I know why their good humor is failing.

BERGAMIN [*behind the shrubbery*]. Ah!

PERCINET. I do, indeed. Our exaltation frets their earth-
25 drawn souls. I much respect my father . . . and the author of your being; but they are simple bourgeois, of little elevation. Our glory rather throws them in the shade.

PASQUINOT [*behind the trees*]. Eh!

SYLVETTE. *Passés* fathers of famous lovers!

30 PERCINET [*laughing*]. They find my plumes importunate.

SYLVETTE. In your presence your father has the vague uneasiness of a—I don't know that I ought to say it . . .

29. *Passé*s, a French adjective: behind the times, antiquated, out of date.

PERCINET. Go on, you rogue!

SYLVETTE. Of a duck that has bred an eagle!

BERGAMIN [*behind the shrubbery*]. Ho! ho!

SYLVETTE [*laughing more gaily*]. Poor parents! what tricks
our secret love did play them! 5

PASQUINOT [*behind the shrubbery*]. He! he!

PERCINET. Yes, Destiny always brings lovers together by
unforeseen windings, and Chance makes itself a Scapin for
Leanders!

BERGAMIN [*behind the shrubbery*]. Ha! ha! 10

SYLVETTE. And so tonight we are to sign the contract!

PERCINET [*going up the stage*]. I'm off to order the violins!

SYLVETTE. Go quick!

PERCINET. I'll run!

SYLVETTE [*calling him back*]. Wait, I'm good. I'm going 15
to the gate with you. [*They go up the stage, arms entwined.*]

SYLVETTE [*languishing tone*]. We equal, I think, the most
famous lovers.

PERCINET. Yes, we shall be numbered among those charm-
ing immortals, Romeo and Juliet, Alda and Roland. 20

SYLVETTE. Aminta and her shepherd.

PERCINET. Pyramus and Thisbe!

SYLVETTE. Many and many more! [*They go out. Their
voices are heard, always more faintly, from among the trees.*].

8. *a Scapin for Leanders*. Scapin is a tricky servant in Molière's comedy *Les Fourberies de Scapin* (1671). Employed by two lovers, he cleverly outwits, by his ruses, their fathers, who have other marriage plans for their sons. Leander was a Greek lover who nightly swam the Hellespont to see his beloved Hero. (For the complete story see Guerber, *Myths of Greece and Rome*, pages 111-117.) So here Percinet boasts that Chance has made itself a clever servant to assist him, the lover.

20. *Alda and Roland*. Roland, the hero of the *Chanson de Roland*, the great French epic of the early middle ages, was the lover of Alda.

21. *Aminta*, the heroine of the pastoral drama of the same name by Tasso (1544-1595), an Italian poet.

22. *Pyramus and Thisbe*, "legendary lovers of ancient Babylon." Through a series of tragic misunderstandings each, believing the other dead, commits suicide (for the story see Guerber, *Myths of Greece and Rome*, pages 117-118). In Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Bottom and his fellows present a parody of this story.

THE VOICE OF PERCINET. Francesca da Rimini, you know, and Paolo.

THE VOICE OF SYLVETTE. Petrarch and Laura.

BERGAMIN [*coming out from his hiding place*]. Have you
5 finished?

PASQUINOT [*following him; railing*]. The issue of your plan, Sir Wiseman, equals your hope, and even outstrips it. Result without doubt foreseen by you, dear master of strategy—our children are completely mad!

10 BERGAMIN. Your daughter is certainly irritating enough with her endless chant of the famous abduction.

PASQUINOT. And your son, with his vaunted heroism, takes on airs that don't sit at all well on my nerves.

BERGAMIN. But the most exasperating thing of all is their
15 representing us as two simple, ordinary dupes, and joking about our willful blindness and our never surprising one of their rendezvous. It's stupid, if you like, but I must confess it roils me.

PASQUINOT. Did you foresee that, Sir Wiseman? Thanks
20 to you, your small boy talks like a lunatic, and thinks himself first purveyor of mustard to the Pope.

BERGAMIN. A purveyor whose mustard mounts my nostrils!

.PASQUINOT. I'm going to tell them everything, at once!

25 BERGAMIN. No, wait! It won't do to speak freely yet. When once they are married, we will talk. Up to the last strains of the nuptial violins, let us hold ourselves as mute as carps.

PASQUINOT. So be it then. But here we are, caught in our
30 own trap, thanks to your famous scheme!

1. *Francesca da Rimini . . . Paolo*. Francesca da Rimini and Paolo were two famous lovers of medieval Italy. They met their death through Giovanni, the husband of Francesca and the brother of Paolo. Dante tells their story in *The Divine Comedy*.

3. *Petrarch and Laura*. Laura was the lady to whom were addressed the sonnets of Petrarch, the leading early Renaissance poet of Italy (1304-1374).

BERGAMIN. You admired it, my dear.

PASQUINOT. Ah, 'twas a beautiful scheme!

BERGAMIN [*aside*]. He exasperates me!

[SYLVETTE enters gaily, in her hand a flowery branch, which she waves at PERCINET now behind the scenes; then she comes down the stage between the two fathers.]

SYLVETTE. Good morning, dear papa! Good morning, my father to be!

5

BERGAMIN. Good morning, my daughter to be!

SYLVETTE [*imitating him*]. "Good morning, my daughter to be!" Why, what a crusty air you have this morning!

BERGAMIN. It's Pasquinot who—who—

SYLVETTE [*shaking her branch under his nose*]. Hush! 10
hush! be calm! I come like Peace, waving a palm branch. There are still little discords between you? Why, that's permitted. Could you love each other like old friends?

PASQUINOT [*aside*]. What irony!

BERGAMIN [*aloud, mockingly*]. Yes, that is true. Our 15
hatred was such that we could not . . .

SYLVETTE. Just think of it! A mortal hatred! Oh! when I remember what you said of papa, there among your rose trees, without suspecting that I was sitting behind the good wall, hearing everything! . . .

20

BERGAMIN [*aside*]. Her stupidity is—

SYLVETTE [*to PASQUINOT*]. For I came here every day, you know, to meet Percinet. To think that you never had a suspicion!

PASQUINOT [*ironically*]. Oh! as to that, may I die if— 25

SYLVETTE. And yet we always came at the same hour. [*To BERGAMIN*.] Ha! ha! I hear Percinet yet, crying out to you, the very day of the abduction, "I will marry in a fashion the most extravagantly romantic!" Tell me, hasn't he kept his word?

30

BERGAMIN [*vexed*]. Really? And you think if I had wished—

SYLVETTE. There! there! I know from having read it a hundred times. The dreams of lovers are always realized, and the fathers always relent, sooner or later. Some strange and romantic event forces them to soften in the nick of time!

PASQUINOT. Forces them! . . . in the nick of time! Oh, no! let me laugh!

SYLVETTE. But we have proved it!

10 BERGAMIN. And if I were to tell you—

SYLVETTE. What?

BERGAMIN. Nothing.

SYLVETTE. Then why is your manner so insinuating?

BERGAMIN. Why, because . . . [*Aside.*] Ho! it's exasperating at the end!

PASQUINOT. When with a word one might — [*Goes up the stage.*] But we will preserve the mystery!

SYLVETTE. When one has nothing to say, one may well keep silent.

20 PASQUINOT [*breaking forth*]. Nothing to say! The little fool! Then you believe all that? You think things go on as that did? That parks are invaded in spite of grilles?

BERGAMIN. That young girls are still carried off by force?

SYLVETTE. Do I believe it? What is he saying?

25 BERGAMIN [*his temper rising*]. I? I say there's been enough of it—that it's time the whole thing were unmasked. Yes, since the world was a world among worlds, success has been for the blondheads. Bartholo, nursing his hatred in secret, must always incline before Almaviva. But the hour of triumph and just requital has finally sounded for the gray-

30 heads.

SYLVETTE. But—

22. grille, a fence made of wrought-iron bars.

28-29. Bartholo . . . Almaviva. Bartholo was the guardian of Rosine, the heroine of Beaumarchais' *Le Barbier de Séville* (1773). He wished to marry her himself and keep her from her lover Almaviva, of whom he was very jealous.

PASQUINOT. Once we papas were Cassandre, Orgon, G ron te, weren't we? You thought no further than those old fogies. Well, you don't find them among modern fathers. The deceived of other days are deceivers in their turn. Had we asked you to love one another, neither you nor Percinet 5 would have heard a word of it. To forbid it was excellent play!

SYLVETTE. But perhaps then you knew—

PASQUINOT. Assuredly!

SYLVETTE. Our duos? 10

BERGAMIN. I heard their sweet murmurings!

SYLVETTE. The benches where we climbed?

PASQUINOT. Put there expressly.

SYLVETTE. The duel?

BERGAMIN. Mere feint! 15

SYLVETTE. The swordsmen?

PASQUINOT. Counterfeit!

SYLVETTE. My abduction?—oh, no! This is false!

BERGAMIN [*fumbling in his pocket*]. False, when I have right here the bill of it! 20

SYLVETTE [*snatching it away from him*]. Oh! give it to me! [*She reads.*] “Straforel, Confidential Business House. One simulated abduction, to bring about engagement of marriage”! . . . Oh! . . . “Eight dark mantles, at five francs each; eight masks” . . . 25

BERGAMIN [*to PASQUINOT*]. I fear me we have spoken too soon.

SYLVETTE [*reading*]. “One sedan chair, decorated, new design, pink upholstery”—[*With irony.*] The thing was well done! [*She laughs and throws the bill on the table.*] 30

PASQUINOT [*surprised*]. She is not angry?

1. *Cassandre, Orgon, G ron te*. Cassandre was a daughter of Priam, king of Troy. She had the gift of prophecy, but no one would believe her. Orgon was the foolish husband and father in Moli re's *Tartuffe* (1667). G ron te was the gullible old man in Moli re's *Le M decin Malgr  Lui* (1666) and *Les Fourberies de Scapin* (1671). So here Pasquinot says, in effect: “Once we fathers were foolish and gullible old men, weren't we?”

10. *duos*, duets.

SYLVETTE [*pleasantly*]. Ah, it was a charming conceit, but a great waste of brilliancy. Do you think, Monsieur Bergamin, that if I love my Percinet, it is thanks to your stratagem?

5 PASQUINOT. She takes it well.

BERGAMIN [*to SYLVETTE*]. You take it well.

PASQUINOT. One may say, then, to Percinet—

SYLVETTE. Oh, nothing!—No, say nothing to him . . . Men!—they're so stupid!

10 BERGAMIN. What good sense! just look at that little head! and I who thought—[*Drawing out his watch.*] But the contract—we forget; we must make ready for that. [*Offering his hand to SYLVETTE.*] Good friends?

SYLVETTE. Do you ask it?

15 BERGAMIN [*turning again before leaving the stage*]. You're not at all angry with me?

SYLVETTE [*all honey*]. I assure you! [PASQUINOT and BERGAMIN go out. SYLVETTE, with frigid rage.] That Monsieur Bergamin—how I detest him!

20 PERCINET [*enters, radiant*]. Ah! you are here yet? But I understand. You cannot quit the site of our matchless adventure!

SYLVETTE [*seated on the bench at the left*]. Matchless, in truth!

25 PERCINET. It is here that you, half lifeless, saw me, like an Amadis, combat the thirty swordsmen!

SYLVETTE. But no; there were ten.

PERCINET [*drawing nearer*]. Dear, what is the matter? What has made you sad? Those eyes where sapphire melts
30 in amethyst seem clouded with some grief.

SYLVETTE [*aside*]. His language is at times rather pretentious.

25. *Amadis*, the hero of a cycle of medieval romances, many of whose remarkable adventures were to win Oriana his beloved.

PERCINET. Never mind; I understand the tender regret this adorable spot must awaken in you. You lament the old wall with its creeping greenery, witness of our first hopes and fears. Yet it is not destroyed, but crowned with glory. Is the balcony of Verona no more? 5

SYLVETTE [*impatiently*]. Ah!

PERCINET. Does not that ever-white balcony let tremble endlessly beside the never-flowerless pomegranate, in a wind forever fresh, its imperishable ladder gilded by an immortal dawn? 10

SYLVETTE. Oh!

PERCINET [*more and more lyric*]. The eternal duo makes the eternal scene; and so, though demolished, it rises yet—that wall on which, a wild proprietor, our marvelous love pushed forth its marvelous shoots! 15

SYLVETTE [*aside*]. He will never end!

PERCINET [*with a smile full of promise*]. But you just now expressed the wish to see our story in a poem. That poem—

SYLVETTE [*disquieted*]. Well? 20

PERCINET. I am riming it myself.

SYLVETTE. You know how to make verses?

PERCINET. Bah! do I know how to fence? Listen to the beginning. I made it as I came. "The Hostile Fathers." Poem. 25

SYLVETTE. Oh!

PERCINET [*posing to declaim*]. Canto First.

SYLVETTE. Oh!

PERCINET. What ails you?

SYLVETTE. Happiness—my nerves—a sudden faintness! 30
[*She dissolves in tears.*] Let me compose myself. [*She turns her back to him, and hides her face in her handkerchief.*]

5. the balcony of Verona, the setting for the famous scene in *Romeo and Juliet*.

PERCINET [*stupefied*]. I will leave you. [*Then, aside, with a superior smile.*] On a day like this, such distress is natural. [*He goes to the right, sees the paper on the table, and quickly drawing a pencil from his pocket, seats himself, saying:*]

5 I'll jot down the verses, nevertheless. [*He takes the paper, gets ready to write, but stops, pencil in air, and reads:*] "I, Straforel, pretending to fall, pierced by a skillless blade—costume injured, ten francs; dignity, forty." [*Smiling.*] What is this? [*Continues reading, low. His smile dies out, his eyes*
10 *grow wide.*]

SYLVETTE [*still on the bench, wiping away her tears*]. If he only knew, he would fall from his heights! I nearly betrayed myself. I must be careful.

PERCINET. Ho! . . . ho! . . . ho!

15 SYLVETTE. What did you say?

PERCINET [*hiding the bill with dispatch*]. I? Nothing, nothing!

SYLVETTE [*aside*]. His error tortures me!

PERCINET [*aside*]. That is why the body was not found.

20 SYLVETTE [*aside, rising*]. He seems piqued. I must make up with him. [*She turns around; then, seeing he does not stir, coquettishly.*] You haven't said anything about my dress today.

PERCINET [*indifferent*]. Blue does not become you. I
25 prefer you in pink.

SYLVETTE [*aside, alarmed*]. Blue does not become me! Can he know anything? [*Looking at the table.*] The account . . . I must indeed have put it there!

PERCINET [*seeing her look about*]. What's the matter with
30 you that you turn round and round like that?

SYLVETTE. Nothing. [*Aside.*] A paper—the wind sometimes blows it away. [*Aloud, shaking out her skirt.*] I was turning to see how my dress goes. [*Aside.*] I shall very soon know if he has found it. [*Aloud.*] Hm! You were just

going to recite some verses on our love. [PERCINET *starts*. *She takes his arm, and, very sweetly.*] Say them!

PERCINET. Oh, no!

SYLVETTE [*ironically*]. On our adventure!

PERCINET. They are only just begun, you know; I've not
arrived at—

SYLVETTE. The detailed account?

PERCINET. Yes, the—[*Whirling around and looking at her.*]
Pardon, but—

SYLVETTE. But, pardon—

10

PERCINET [*aside*]. Ah, she knows, then?

SYLVETTE. He knows, then?

BOTH. You know, then? [*A moment passes; they break
into laughter.*] Ha! ha! ha!

PERCINET. Isn't it comical?

15

SYLVETTE. Very comical!

PERCINET. In truth, they made us play a rôle!

SYLVETTE. A rôle!

PERCINET. So our fathers were good neighbors?

SYLVETTE. Good friends!

20

PERCINET. Upon my word, they should even have been
cousins!

SYLVETTE [*with a curtsy*]. I'm to marry my cousin!

PERCINET. I'm to marry my cousin!

SYLVETTE. It's charming!

25

PERCINET. It's classic!

SYLVETTE. True, one can imagine a marriage more—but
it's so good to see love accord with duty!

PERCINET. And with interest! For these two parks—
their dependency—

30

SYLVETTE. In short, excellent marriage of convenience.
We are far from our poor idyll on the wall!

PERCINET. There's nothing to be said of idylls, that is very
sure.

SYLVETTE. I go back to the rank and file of young girls.

PERCINET. I am the prosaic fiancé of everyday life! And 'twas as Romeo, Sylvette, that I pleased you!

5 SYLVETTE. Ah! Romeo! 'tis clear that you are he no longer.

PERCINET. And do you still think to be Juliet?

SYLVETTE. You become bitter.

PERCINET. And you, in truth, a trifle cutting.

10 SYLVETTE. If you have been ridiculous, pray, is the fault mine?

PERCINET. If I was a little so, I was not alone.

SYLVETTE. Very well, so be it: we were ridiculous. Ah, my poor bluebird, how your plumes have faded!

15 PERCINET [*jeeringly*]. Ha! a simili-assault!

SYLVETTE. And pseudo-sword-thrusts!

PERCINET. Fie, the false abduction!

SYLVETTE. Ho! the tinsel hero! Alas, our poor poesy was mockery! In bursting thus before our wondering eyes, fair
20 iridescent bubble, you are no more than a little soapsuds spattering on one's nose!

PERCINET. Then lover whose sorriest counterfeit I was, and mistress in whose shoes she stood unmeetly—O pale and noble Shakespearean couple, we had nothing in common with
25 you, nothing!

SYLVETTE. Nothing!

PERCINET. Then instead of playing the divine and beloved drama, we have played an infamous parody!

SYLVETTE. So our nightingale was a canary!

30 PERCINET. So the immortal wall was a stage for marionettes, and when each day we appeared there in half length, instead of two paragons of Love's eternal types, we were no more than two puppets set dancing by the rude paternal fingers!

SYLVETTE. True. But we should be still more ridiculous if we loved each other less.

PERCINET. We will love each other madly! In the first place, we are obliged to love!

SYLVETTE. But we adore each other! 5

PERCINET. The word is not too strong.

SYLVETTE. Love can well solace a like disaster—is it not so, my treasure?

PERCINET. Assuredly, my star!

SYLVETTE. Good day, then, my dear love! 10

PERCINET. Good night, my beauty!

SYLVETTE. I go to dream of you, dear soul, for my part.

PERCINET. And I of you, for mine. Good day!

SYLVETTE. Good night! [*She goes out.*] 15

PERCINET. Oh, what a farce! Oh! to be treated like this! . . . But who is that be-mustached gentleman, showing so strange a doublet beneath his ample cloak? I do not know him. [*STRAFOREL, entering as these words are spoken, pompously descends the stage.*] 20

PERCINET. What is it?

STRAFOREL [*smiling*]. It is to get a little sum.

PERCINET. A caterer?

STRAFOREL. Precisely. Go, then, good young man, and tell your papa I am waiting for him. 25

PERCINET. Your name?

STRAFOREL. My name is Straforel.

PERCINET [*staggered*]. He? Oh, no, oh, no! This becomes too intolerable!

STRAFOREL [*smiling*]. What, what! You know, then, 30 young man?

PERCINET [*throwing him the bill, which he draws in bits from his pocket*]. Wretch! it was you!

STRAFOREL. Tut, tut! Yes, it was I, by Bacchus!

PERCINET. Oh! to encounter this man! . . . I would fly to the ends of the earth! . . .

STRAFOREL [*with satisfied air*]. And I am so plump and rosy that the quotation, it seems to me, imposes itself:

5 *Les gens que vous tuez se portent*—

PERCINET [*rushing on him, sword in hand*]. You shall see!

STRAFOREL [*parrying with his arm, tranquil as a fencing master giving a lesson*]. Hand high! foot forward! Not to be more expert at your age, monsieur, is a crime! [*By a*
10 *dexterous movement, he relieves him of his sword, and returns it to him with a bow.*] What! you end your fencing lesson so soon?

PERCINET [*exasperated, taking back his sword*]. Oh, I'm going away! They treat me like a child; good! I will take
15 my revenge! I will have romance, reality, adventures, and duels to scandalize the shade of Don Juan! [*He goes off running, brandishing his sword.*]

STRAFOREL. Very good! very good! but how shall I be paid? [*Looking into the wings.*] Hey! stop there! . . . If
20 here isn't another fracas! [*Enter BERGAMIN and PASQUINOT, disordered as after a scuffle.*]

PASQUINOT [*readjusting himself, and handing BERGAMIN his peruke*]. Here's your peruke!

BERGAMIN. Humph! and here's yours!

25 PASQUINOT. You understand that after such proceedings . . . Here's your frill!

BERGAMIN. And you will admit that to live with you longer would be too great a sacrifice to the happiness of my son.

30 PASQUINOT [*sees SYLVETTE coming*]. My daughter! Of all things, let us hide this from her!

5. *Les gens que vous tuez se portent*, those whom you kill appear in health.

15. *Don Juan*, the hero of many literary productions in different countries. He typifies the dashing, attractive hero who is loose in his morals.

SYLVETTE [*entering and throwing herself on her father's neck*]. Papa, I don't want to marry Percinet!

[*Enter THE NOTARY and four bourgeois in gala dress, the witnesses.*]

BERGAMIN. The witnesses! The notary! . . . The devil take them!

THE WITNESSES [*astonished*]. Eh? 5

THE NOTARY [*with dignity*]. These words—

STRAFOREL [*in the midst of the tumult, picking up the bill PERCINET has thrown down*]. My account—pay it! Ninety pistoles! [*Enter guests, and three violins playing a minuet.*]

BERGAMIN [*beside himself, striking out in all directions*]. 10
To the devil with the violins! [*The violins continue automatically their minuet.*]

STRAFOREL [*impatently, to BERGAMIN*]. Well, sir, my hand is open!

BERGAMIN. Talk to Pasquinot! 15

PASQUINOT. Talk to Bergamin!

STRAFOREL [*emphasizing the words of the bill*]. “Simulated abduction to bring about engagement of marriage.”

BERGAMIN. The engagement is broken; that removes 20
the obligation.

STRAFOREL [*to PASQUINOT*]. But, monsieur—

PASQUINOT. Give you a sou, now that everything is ended? You are mad! [*Enter BLAISE.*]

BERGAMIN [*to whom BLAISE has just spoken in a low tone*].
My son! . . . gone!

SYLVETTE [*bewildered*]. Gone!

STRAFOREL [*who is going up the stage, stops and observes her*]. Aha!

BERGAMIN. After him! Fly! [*He runs off, followed by the notary and guests.*] 30

9. pistole, a gold coin, worth a little less than three dollars.

SYLVETTE [*greatly moved*]. Gone!

STRAFOREL [*coming back to observe her more closely*]. If I could heal the breach between these pretties—hem! perhaps—

SYLVETTE [*suddenly furious*]. Gone! Oh, it is too much!

[*Exit, followed by PASQUINOT.*]

- 5 STRAFOREL [*triumphant*]. Straforel, my dear, to get your ninety pistoles, you have to patch up this marriage! [*He goes off. The three violins, left alone in the middle of the stage, continue their minuet.*]

CURTAIN

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. Why are the fathers out of patience with one another at the opening of the act?
2. What is your attitude toward the lovers when you see that they realize the deception which has been practiced upon them?
3. What is the dramatic effect of the fathers' fighting with one another toward the close of the act?
4. From the point of view of the plot what is the purpose of Straforel's closing words?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Comparison between the fathers and the old men in *The Workhouse Ward*.
2. Character sketches of Sylvette and Percinet, as they appear in this act.

ACT III

SCENE. *The same. Material has been brought for reconstructing the wall, which is going up in the rear. Sacks of plaster, mason's tools.*

[BERGAMIN and PASQUINOT are discovered, each from his side inspecting the work. A MASON is troweling, sitting on his heels, his back to the audience.]

THE MASON [*singing as he works*]. Tra lai delurio . . .

BERGAMIN. These workmen are slow.

THE MASON. Delurio, deluro . . .

PASQUINOT [*following his motions with satisfaction*]. That's it! some rubble! 5

BERGAMIN [*same action*]. Ouf! a dab of mortar!

PASQUINOT. Pf! a trowel pat!

THE MASON [*making cadenzas*]. Delurio, delu-ri-i-i-el-le!

PASQUINOT [*coming down the stage*]. Fine voice, but uncommonly slow work! 10

BERGAMIN [*also coming down, in boisterous good humor*]. Ha! ha! Here's one panel begun! Good!

PASQUINOT [*tapping with his foot ground yet to be covered*]. By tomorrow the wall will be two feet high here! Oh, joy!

BERGAMIN [*becoming lyrical*]. May I soon see thy tower- 15
ing form again, beloved wall!

PASQUINOT. What did you say, sir?

BERGAMIN. I was not speaking to you. [*Some moments pass.*] What do you do in the evening, after dinner?

PASQUINOT. Nothing. And you? 20

BERGAMIN. Nor I either. [*A time passes. They salute and promenade.*]

PASQUINOT [*stopping*]. There's no news, then, from your son?

BERGAMIN. None. He's still abroad. 25

PASQUINOT. He will soon be relieved of his money, and then he'll come back sure enough.

BERGAMIN. Thanks. [*They bow and promenade. Time passes.*]

5 PASQUINOT [*stopping once more*]. Now that the wall is going up again, monsieur, I'm quite willing to have you come in sometimes—as a neighbor.

BERGAMIN. Very well. I may do you the honor. [*They salute.*]

10 PASQUINOT [*brusquely*]. Good! Then come have a game of piquet!

BERGAMIN [*gruffly*]. Ha! . . . ho! . . . pardon! I don't know whether I can—

PASQUINOT. Since I invite you.

15 BERGAMIN. Hm! . . . I should prefer bezique.

PASQUINOT. Come on then.

BERGAMIN [*following him out*]. You owe me ten sous from the last time. [*Turns around.*] Work well, Mason!

THE MASON [*at the top of his voice*]. Tralaï! . . .

20 PASQUINOT. Fine voice! [*They go off.*]

[*As soon as they are gone, THE MASON turns, takes off his hat; it is STRAFOREL.*]

STRAFOREL. Yes, mason I am, since under this smirch I've come here to plaster. [*Sits down on the bit of wall begun.*] The young man is still on the chase for the Romantic, but without being a seer, one may predict that he'll come back
25 without game, and broken to harness. Since Life, then, has charged herself with giving him a salutary bath in reality, and will open the eyes of the chicken and in time send him winging this way, I, by a wise and like course of action, seek to cure Sylvette of her taste for adventure. Straforel, man
30 of many talents, you often played the marquis or the prince,

11-15. *piquet* . . . *bezique*, card games.

17. *sou*, a copper coin, worth about a cent.

those days when you were catcalled in the provinces! That is going to serve us. [*He draws a letter from his smock, and puts it in the mossy hollow of a tree trunk.*] Ah, fathers, what thanks you will owe me! [*Catching sight of SYLVETTE.*] There she is! To my cement! [*He returns to his troweling and disappears behind the wall.*]

SYLVETTE [*advances furtively, looks to see if she is observed, then*]. No! no one! [*She throws her muslin scarf over the bench at the left.*] Today shall I find the letter? [*Goes toward the tree.*] Every day a gallant unknown comes to put one here, in this trunk split open by the lightning—his green-painted letter-box. [*She thrusts her hand into the hollow of the tree.*] Yes, this is my good courier! [*She reads.*]—"Sylvette, heart of marble, you hold here the final letter from out this heart of green. Why, tigress, have you not replied to the magic fruit this tree has so long daily borne for you?"—Ah! what a style!—"The love which in my soul mutters like distant thunder"—[*She tears the letter nervously.*] Ah! Monsieur Percinet is running the world over! He is right, and I will do the same! Do they think I'm going to stay here to die of dullness! Whoever wrote these words, let him come! let him rise out of these green shrubs with their nests and their chants, and just as I am, without even going for a hat, I will follow him. I am ready now for Romance at any cost. Let the gentleman come—I already almost love him. How I would stretch out my hands to him, if he came, and how—

STRAFOREL [*in a ringing voice*]. He is here.

SYLVETTE. Help! Percinet! [*Retreating as STRAFOREL advances*]. Man, do not approach me!

STRAFOREL [*amorously*]. Why this hostile air? I am he whose style you were just now admiring, the too highly favored mortal whose missive pleased you, and on whose love you were relying if one may trust your words—to be seized and borne far beyond pursuit!

SYLVETTE [*not knowing what to do*]. Man!

STRAFOREL. You take me for a mason!—That's delicious! Know, then, that I am the Marquis of Astafiorquercita, fevered mind, cankered heart, who, seeking to spice a too
5 tasteless existence, wanders in the fashion of an errant knight with whose soul a poet-dreamer's mingles. It was to penetrate your park, O cruel beauty—it was for love of you that I took up the trowel! [*With an elegant gesture he throws aside his trowel, divests himself of his smock, takes off his hat,*
10 *white with plaster, and appears in the glittering costume of an Almariva, blond peruke, fetching mustachios.*]

SYLVETTE. Monsieur!

STRAFOREL. From a certain Straforel I learned your story. A blind, unreasoning love for the poor victim,
15 dreamy innocent, o'ercame me!

SYLVETTE. Marquis!

STRAFOREL. Do not look so bewildered. The scoundrel having boasted of the rôle he'd played, I killed him!

SYLVETTE. Killed him! . . .

20 STRAFOREL. With a single sword thrust!—To be an avenger was ever my mania!

SYLVETTE. Monsieur!

STRAFOREL. I understand you, O dear heart misconstrued! You want—am I not right?—Romance at any
25 cost.

SYLVETTE. Marquis! . . . indeed . . .

STRAFOREL. 'Tis settled then. Tonight I will abduct you!

SYLVETTE. Monsieur—

STRAFOREL. And for good!

30 SYLVETTE. Monsieur!

STRAFOREL. Ah, what a lovely dream! You gave con-

11. *Almariva*, a character in the comedies of the French dramatist Beaumarchais (see note on page 464), who typifies the graces and vices of the nobility as it existed before the French Revolution. *peruke*, wig.

sent! I heard you! Yes, today we will take our mad flight, and if your papa go distracted from grief, so much the worse!

SYLVETTE. Monsieur . . .

STRAFOREL. And if they close in on our track—for 5 abductors are rigorously pursued—so much the better!

SYLVETTE. O monsieur!

STRAFOREL. So much the better, in truth! We can fly on foot, in a tempestuous night, our brows bared to the rain and the raging wind! 10

SYLVETTE. Monsieur . . .

STRAFOREL. And to gain some far-off continent, madam, we will embark headlong!

SYLVETTE. Monsieur . . .

STRAFOREL. And far, far away, on a soil as yet untrod, 15 where we shall live happy in our homespun.

SYLVETTE. Ah! but . . .

STRAFOREL. For I have nothing! You wouldn't wish it otherwise, would you?

SYLVETTE. Indeed! 20

STRAFOREL. Our sole refreshment shall be bread—bread moistened with tender tears!

SYLVETTE. And yet . . .

STRAFOREL. Exile for us shall blossom with delights!

SYLVETTE. Monsieur . . . 25

STRAFOREL. And misery for us shall be but bliss! Not even a rude hut! . . . A tent!—thy heart!

SYLVETTE. A tent?

STRAFOREL. Yes, indeed, yes! Four pickets, two flaps! Or if you'd rather, nothing but the stars! 30

SYLVETTE. Oh, but . . .

STRAFOREL. What! do I see you seized with trembling? You would perhaps not go so far away? Be it so! We will

live in hiding, O my blond deity, alone, having incurred the vengeance of the world!—Oh, rapture! . . .

SYLVETTE. But, monsieur, you mistake . . .

STRAFOREL. Men will hold aloof from us in scorn!

5 SYLVETTE. Ah, me!

STRAFOREL. Prejudice is made to trample under foot. The world's contempt will be felicity!

SYLVETTE. Monsieur . . .

STRAFOREL. I shall have no other occupation than to
10 play upon the gamut of my passion!

SYLVETTE. Monsieur . . .

STRAFOREL. In brief, we will live in lush poesy . . . I shall have outbursts of jealous frenzy—

SYLVETTE. Monsieur . . .

15 STRAFOREL. And when I'm jealous, you know, I've the ferocity of jackals and of wolves!

SYLVETTE [*overcome, falls fainting on the bench*]. Monsieur!

STRAFOREL. If you should break our hallowed bonds, you would be butchered straight!

20 SYLVETTE. Monsieur.

STRAFOREL. You shudder?

SYLVETTE. Ah, Heaven, what a lesson!

STRAFOREL. Body of Bacchus! Is it blood or froth runs through your arterial tubes? By thunder! You have an
25 air a bit schoolgirlish for daring such precarious fortunes. Let's see, do I go alone, or do we go together?

SYLVETTE. Monsieur . . .

STRAFOREL. Yes, I understand; my voice reassures you. Ah, well, we will set out, now that I see you strong. I will
30 abduct you at once, on horseback, across my saddle. Oh, you will be on the rack! but sedan chairs, easy and aesthetic, are in the mode for false abductions only!

SYLVETTE. But, monsieur . . .

31. *will be on the rack, will suffer physical pain.*

STRAFOREL [*goes up the stage*]. Till I return!

SYLVETTE. But, monsieur!

STRAFOREL. Till I return! The time to go in search of a horse—a cloak—

SYLVETTE [*beside herself*]. Monsieur!

5

STRAFOREL [*with a magnificent gesture*]. And we will flee from land to land! Oh, the long-time dreamt-of and at last encountered!—the soul to whom my soul may say: "My sister!" Till I return, and then forever!

SYLVETTE [*faintly*]. Forever!

10

STRAFOREL. Oh, nectar! You are to live beside the beloved being for whom you yearned before you knew him, and who, not knowing you, for you was parching! [*Sees her fainting on the bench.*] And now, Percinet, you may come back! [*He goes out.*]

15

SYLVETTE [*alone, opening her eyes*]. Monsieur! . . . Marquis! No, not across the saddle! Have pity on me!—No, I am not the one—not at all! Let me go in!—A school-girl? Yes, you are right! . . . He's no longer there? . . . Marquis! . . . Alone? . . . Ah, Heaven! what a frightful 20 dream! [*A little time. She recovers herself.*] I like better being abducted in play! Well, well, Sylvette! how is this, my dear! A little while ago you were beckoning the Romantic, with great cries, and the Romantic come, you are not satisfied? Oh, homespun, exile, the tent, the stars!—no, 25 that is too much! A little romance, yes, like a little parsley in one's soup, but this is too much! I cannot endure these shocks. I would content myself with gentler emotions. . . . [*Twilight falling veils the park. She takes up her scarf, dropped on the bench, covers with it her head and 30 shoulders, and, pensive.*] Who knows if? . . . [PERCINET appears, in rags, his arm in a sling, scarcely able to move. A felt hat, from which droops a bedraggled plume, conceals his face.]

PERCINET [*not yet seen by SYLVETTE*]. I've eaten nothing since yesterday. I am ready to fall from fatigue, and my pride is gone. Oh, the mad prank! I've seen hard things, and found little amusement in adventure! [*He sinks on the wall. His hat falls off, uncovering his face. SYLVETTE sees him.*]

SYLVETTE. You! [*He gets up, overcome by emotion.*] And in what a state! Is it possible!

PERCINET [*piteously*]. It is possible.

10 SYLVETTE [*clasping her hands*]. Kind Heaven!

PERCINET. Don't you think I have somewhat the profile painters give the Prodigal Son? [*He reels.*]

SYLVETTE. He cannot stand!

PERCINET. I feel a trifle weary.

15 SYLVETTE [*seeing his arm; with a cry*]. Wounded!

PERCINET. Could you then be pitiful to ingrates?

SYLVETTE [*severely, moving away*]. Only fathers, monsieur, kill the fatted calf. [*PERCINET makes a movement, and his wounded arm forces from him a grimace. SYLVETTE, frightened*
20 *in spite of herself*].—But this wound?

PERCINET. Let me reassure you; the wound is by no means grave.

SYLVETTE. And what, sir vagabond, have you been doing all this time?

25 PERCINET. Nothing good, Sylvette. [*He coughs.*]

SYLVETTE. You cough now?

PERCINET. Ah, yes! we tramped the highways, at night . . .

SYLVETTE. And there one catches cold. . . . What
30 strange clothes you wear!

PERCINET. Robbers took mine, Sylvette, and gave me theirs.

SYLVETTE [*with irony*]. And how have you fared as a gallant?

PERCINET. Don't ask such inopportune questions, Syl-
vette.

SYLVETTE. You have climbed many balconies, no doubt?

PERCINET [*aside*]. I just missed breaking my neck!

SYLVETTE. Guitar in hand, have chanted many a noc- 5
turne?

PERCINET [*aside*]. And brought more than one little
water-jar to empty on my head!

SYLVETTE. At last, it seems, scratched in a real duel?

PERCINET [*aside*]. Which cost me an almost mortal thrust. 10

SYLVETTE. And you come back to us?

PERCINET. Humble, pitiful!

SYLVETTE. Yes, but you at least found the Poetic.

PERCINET. No, I went far to seek what was very near.

Ah, mock me no longer! . . . I adore you! 15

SYLVETTE. After the disillusion that we had?

PERCINET. What does that matter!

SYLVETTE. But our fathers deceived us horribly.

PERCINET. What does that matter! All is clear now in
my heart— 20

SYLVETTE. But they feigned their hatred.

PERCINET. Did we feign our love?

SYLVETTE. The wall was a puppet stage—you said it
yourself!

PERCINET. Sylvette, I said it, but 'twas blasphemy! — 25
Or if 'twas true, what puppet stage, old wall, you offered us!
—It had for flies the great fresh branches; for perspective,
the out-stretching park, and azure space for frieze; for
orchestra, unseen and sensible, the four winds; for properties,
the borders and bright flowers; for lamp, the sun, and Shake- 30
speare for the prompter! Yes, as one makes those puppets
gesture in whose blouse one gloves his hand, so our fathers

27. *flius*, the space over the whole stage, including everything situated there.

did with us; but remember, Sylvette, on our mimic stage, it was love that made the puppets speak!

SYLVETTE. True, but we thought we were loving culpably.

PERCINET [*earnestly*]. And we were. Keep that pleasant
5 compunction. The intention counts as much as the deed. In thinking ourselves criminal we were so!

SYLVETTE [*weakening*]. Is that quite sure?

PERCINET. Quite sure, dear little friend. We have committed an infamy, pure and simple. I call to witness
10 your balmy breath and your beauty. To love each other was very wrong—very wrong . . .

SYLVETTE [*seating herself near him*]. Very wrong? [*Changing her mood and moving away again.*] Yes, but I regret a little, for the sake of our renown, that the danger run was only
15 imaginary!

PERCINET. It was real for us who believed it so.

SYLVETTE. No, my abduction was false, and so was your duel!

PERCINET. Was your fear, madam? And since you have
20 passed through the state of mind of a person abducted, 'tis exactly as if you had been really.

SYLVETTE. No, the dear remembrance is no more. . . . Those gay lights, those masks and mantles, the soft music, the combat—it's too cruel to think that it was all made by
25 Straforel!

PERCINET. And the vernal night, is it he who made that? Is it he who ordered that gala time which friendly April gave us? Was it he who starred the starry sky? He who with shadow so blotted out the slender rose trees that the
30 roses seemed in some unearthly way to stand spell-stopped in the mysterious air? Did he dispense the trembling grays, the play of blue light? Was it he who poured the languors round about? Did he count in the appearing of the star of silvery rose?

35 SYLVETTE. No, surely.

PERCINET. And did he make it that in that night of spring we were two children of twenty years, and that we loved each other?—For the charm was there—all the charm, Sylvette.

SYLVETTE. All the . . . yes . . . but . . . 5

PERCINET. A tear? He is pardoned, then, the wayward fellow who went abroad in the world?

SYLVETTE. I have always loved you—fie! my poor dear!

PERCINET. And I have found again your forehead with its childish fringe. [*He plays with SYLVETTE's scarf.*] Oh, 10
let me kiss the tenuous border of the filmy veil that floats back from your brow! How it refreshes my lips, this tissue, this tissue fine and pure, for which I did not know how to disdain satins and velvets that compromise!

SYLVETTE. What satins? What velvets? 15

PERCINET [*ardently*]. Nothing, nothing!—rags! Oh, young girl, child, muslin is thy name! How I love this fresh veil!

SYLVETTE. It's lawn.

PERCINET [*on his knees*]. I love it, and tremble lest my kiss do it ill; for this veil to which I kneel, 20

This filmy lawn
That muffles you,
But in the way
That zephyrs do;

This lawn of film, 25
This frail, pure thing,
That rides the ether
Like a wing;

This filmy lawn
A ray has power— 30
So subtle is it—
To deflower;

This lawn of film
Like gossamer
The Virgin floats
On summer air;

5 This filmy lawn,
 It is thy thought,
 Uncrushed as yet
 By what life's wrought!

10 This lawn of film,
 This flame of snow
 A mere naught stirs—
 Thy soul, I trow!

15 This filmy lawn,
 Beloved of me,
 'Tis naught at all
 Unless 'tis thee!

SYLVETTE [*in his arms*]. Poetry, you see, is in the hearts of lovers; it comes not solely from adventures.

PERCINET. That is true. Those from which I return,
20 though very real, were not at all poetical, Sylvette.

SYLVETTE. And those arranged by our Machiavellian papas were poetical though false.

PERCINET. For when the soul loves, she can embroider true flowers on a false woof.

25 SYLVETTE. Poetry, love—why, we were fools to seek it elsewhere when it was within us!

21. *our Machiavellian papas*. Machiavelli (1469-1527) was an Italian diplomat who believed that for his purposes any means justified his end. So Sylvette characterizes the plan of their fathers to bring them together as Machiavellian.

STRAFOREL [*enters, leading in the fathers, and shows them SYLVETTE and PERCINET in each others' arms*]. Betrothed once more!

BERGAMIN. My son! [*He embraces PERCINET.*]

STRAFOREL. Will you pay my bill?

5

PASQUINOT [*to his daughter*]. You love him again?

SYLVETTE. Yes.

PASQUINOT. Linnet!

STRAFOREL [*to BERGAMIN*]. Shall I have my gold?

BERGAMIN. You shall have your gold!

10

SYLVETTE [*trembling*]. But, in truth . . . that voice! . . .
The Marquis of As-ta-fi-or—

STRAFOREL.—quercita. 'Twas I, dear lady, I, Straforel. Pardon my ardor, I beseech you. The method that I took was good in this, that it left you here, and still made you know all the weariness of those adventures which, once experienced, so soon bring disillusion. Without doubt you might [*pointing to PERCINET*], like this citizen, run through them for yourself; but that method, forsooth! being somewhat rough for a young girl, I showed you them in a magic lantern.

15

20

PERCINET. What is this?

SYLVETTE [*quickly*]. Nothing, nothing! I love you!

BERGAMIN [*pointing to the rising wall*]. Tomorrow, rap! a pickax stroke, and this panel of the wall is down!

25

PASQUINOT. Tomorrow, away with cement, sand, and rubble!

STRAFOREL. No, rebuild the wall; it is indispensable.

SYLVETTE [*bringing all the actors around her*]. And now we four, and Monsieur Straforel, crave indulgence for the piece, in a rondel.

30

SYLVETTE. Costumes light and easy rimes,
Love in a garden, piping on the oboe . . .

BERGAMIN. A Florianesque and blithe quintetto.

PASQUINOT. Discord, yes, but passed betimes.

STRAFOREL. Rays of the sun, and moonbeam chimes;
A swordsman dight in a gay mantello.

5 SYLVETTE. Costumes light and easy rimes,
Love in a garden, piping on the oboe . . .

PERCINET. An artless change from ranting mimes,
Some music here, a bit of Watteau,
A decent play and short libretto,
10 Old wall, lovers, scented thymes.

SYLVETTE. Costumes light and easy rimes!

CURTAIN

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS

I. QUESTIONS

1. What is Straforel's device to reunite the lovers?
2. Wherein are they both different after Percinet's return from what they were earlier in the play?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Character of Straforel; his part in the play.
2. Comparison with any comedy you have recently seen or read.

THE PLAY AS A WHOLE

I. QUESTIONS

1. How have we been prepared for the happy ending?
2. Show why the title of the play is appropriate.
3. What episodes in the play do you recall as being most amusing?

II. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. An analysis of the plot to show how the interest is sustained to the end.
2. Clever dramatic situations in the play.
3. *The Romancers* as a satire on romance.
4. The romantic in this play: disillusionment of romance for the lovers; its rediscovery by them.
5. A comparison of certain aspects in this play with those in *Prunella*: situation, characters, setting.
6. Romance and its disillusionment as illustrated in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Chantecler*.

PLAYS BY ROSTAND AND READING LIST

- Les Romanesques*—*The Romancers* (1894).
La Princesse Loïtaine—*The Far-away Princess* (1895).
La Samaritaine—*The Samaritan* (1897).
L'Aiglon—*The Eaglet* (1897).
Cyrano de Bergerac (1897).
Chantecler (1910).

COLLATERAL READINGS SUGGESTED

- Granville Barker and Lawrence Housman, *Prunella*. A romance of youth with the setting in the land of Romance.
 Sir James Barrie, *A Kiss for Cinderella*. A romance of a London orphan during the World War.

Edmond Rostand, *Chantecler*. The hero is a rooster who imagines the sun rises each morning because he crows.

Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*. See comment under Rostand.

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*. Shakespeare's tragedy of youthful love, of which *The Romancers* is in part a parody.

HELPFUL BOOKS

F. W. Chandler, *Contemporary Drama of France* (Stewart and Kidd Company, 1915).

G. K. Chesterton, *Five Types* (Henry Holt and Company, 1911). Rostand, pages 78-82.

Barrett H. Clark, *The Continental Drama of Today* (Henry Holt and Company, 1915). Analytical outlines for study of Rostand on pages 165-180.

DATE DUE

FEB 5 '73			
FEB 6 '74			
FE 8 '79			
GAYLORD			PRINTED IN U.S.A.

PN
6112
C58

10237

10237

PN Coffman

6112

C58 A book of modern plays.

TITLE

10237

PN

6112

C58 Coffman

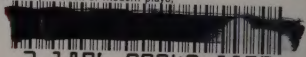
A book of modern plays

JULY 72



N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA

WINGATE COLLEGE LIBRARY
BOOK PN6112 .C58 STAX
Coffman / A book of modern plays.



3 1896 00040 8892